THE SECOND GREAT WAR

Vol. 3



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AIR CHIEF MARSHAL SIR CHARLES PORTAL, G.C.B., D.S.O., M.C.

Frontis

THE SECOND GREAT WAR

A Standard History

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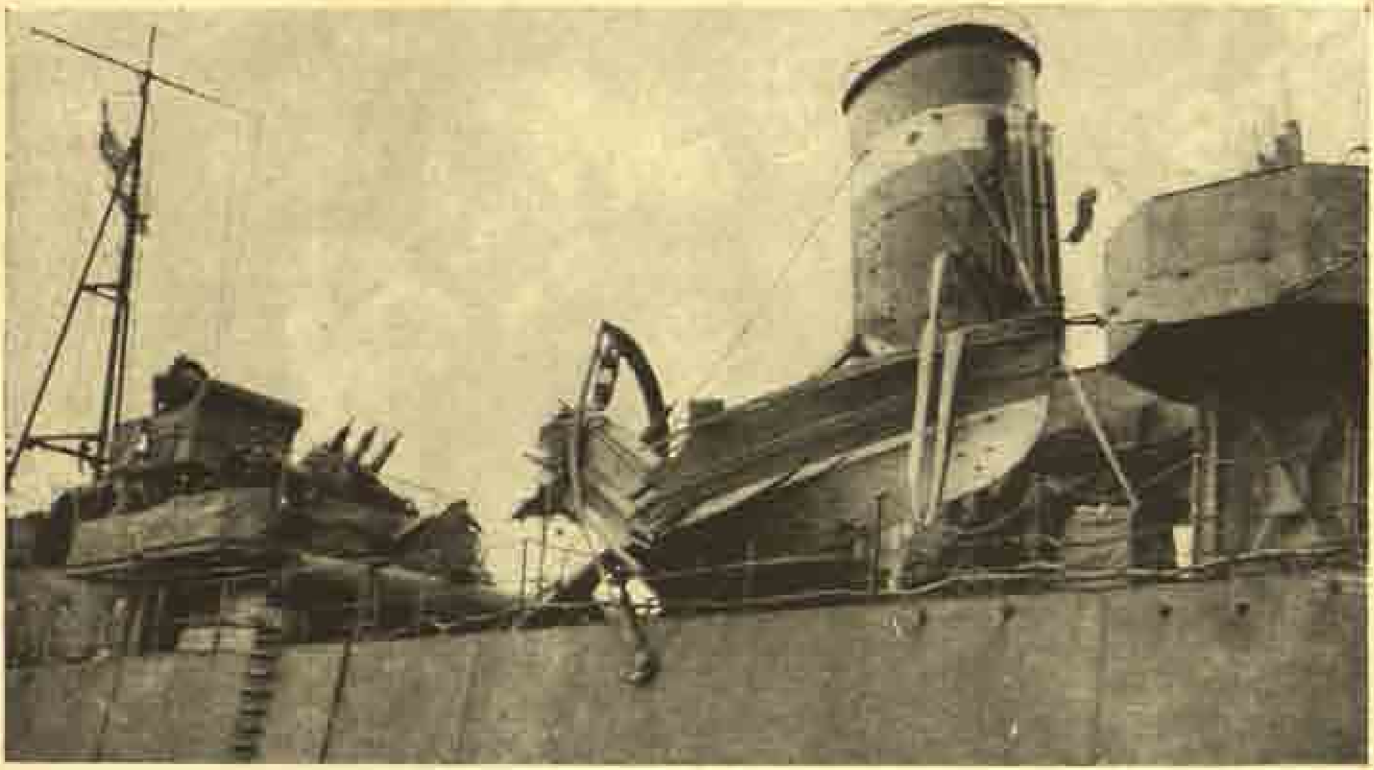
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AFTER THE FIGHT AT NARVIK WAS OVER

British losses in the second battle of Narvik were relatively light, and although the German crews handled their weapons well, no British ship was sunk. In the initial destroyer action itself great skill in manoeuvre was shown by both sides, but superior weight of metal swung the tide of battle in favour of the attackers. Of the British vessels engaged, the 'Punjabi' played as vigorous a part as any: below are some of her victorious crew and, above, part of the destroyer, showing damage typical of the superficial injuries sustained.

Photos, Fox





H.M.S. 'BITTERN' LOST OFF NAMSOS

This amazing photograph was taken on board H.M.S. 'Bittern' immediately after she had been set on fire by bombs from a German aircraft in Namsos Fjord at the beginning of May, 1940. She became derelict and was later torpedoed by one of our submarines to prevent her becoming a danger to other vessels. H.M.S. 'Bittern,' an escort vessel of 1,190 tons, was completed in March, 1938.

Photo, Central Press

THE SEA AFFAIR: THE INVASION OF NORWAY

British Minefields Off Norway—German Fleet Comes Out—Heroic End of 'Glowworm'—Encounter Between 'Renown' and 'Scharnhorst'—The Two Battles of Narvik—Successes of Our Submarines—British Naval Strength Increases—Loss of 'Bittern' and 'Afridi'—H.M.S. 'Effingham' is Wrecked—The Royal Navy's Tasks During the Invasion of the Low Countries—Dutch Warships which Joined Britain's Forces

(A detailed description of events at Narvik is given in Chapter 80)

THE comparative uneventfulness of the war at sea which characterized the month of March, 1940, continued throughout the first week of April, and although it was known that the harbours and bases of Germany were the scene of intense activity, there was little to show what offensive object this portended. It was clear at least that some kind of military expedition was afoot, for it was learned that large numbers of German merchant vessels were being fitted as transports and that a considerable number of ships of all kinds were being assembled at the mouth of the Elbe and in Baltic ports.

On April 8 it was announced that the British Navy had laid minefields along considerable stretches of Norwegian territorial waters: at West Fjord, at the head of which lies the port of Narvik, in an area about forty miles long and four miles wide; at Bodö, on the Norwegian coast south of Trondheim; and at Stadtland, between Trondheim and Bergen. The second and third minefields extended eight to ten miles out to sea.

In a speech in the House of Commons on April 11, Mr. Winston Churchill made clear the intolerable disadvantage which the Allies had suffered during seven months of war by the free use of Norwegian territorial waters permitted to all manner of German shipping. He explained how the peculiar configuration of the Norwegian coast provided a kind of corridor or "covered way" through which German ships could move without molestation. The proposal was made to the Norwegians that a minefield should be laid, a proposal which had been agreed to in the last war but which was now emphatically rejected. This rejection placed the British Government in the invidious position of having either to tolerate a status quo which was becoming unbearable, or reluctantly to disregard the principles of international law for which they were fighting.

The Norwegian Corridor

Meanwhile, as it turned out, during the last week in March the Germans were using the Norwegian corridor to send empty ore ships forward with military stores and concealed troops ready to make their swoop when the appointed moment came on the Norwegian ports which they desired to make their own. When the British minefields were laid in the early morning of April 8, the invasion of Norway had in fact begun, according to plans laid down and in process of fulfilment for at least a month before. Later evidence showed that several years earlier Germany had carried out purposeful surveys of Scandinavian waters.

While the British ships entrusted with the minelaying were disposing themselves at their stations, news of the greatest moment had reached the British commander-in-chief (Sir Charles Forbes) at Scapa Flow. British Naval air reconnaissances had detected a German battle-cruiser accompanied by a number of cruisers, destroyers and other vessels—in fact, as the First Lord said, "quite a fleet"—moving very swiftly northwards. The Commander-in-Chief immediately put to sea to try and find the enemy and bring them to action.

Meanwhile, when the minelayers had completed their task they withdrew to the westward. H.M.S. "Glowworm," one of the destroyers which accompanied this force, had lost a man overboard on the Sunday afternoon, had stopped behind to rescue him, and was hurrying to rejoin her force on Monday morning, April 8, when she saw two German destroyers which she hastened to engage. She reported also the presence of another German ship to the northward. Then her messages stopped.

Stated to be an eye-witness account of the last moments of "Glowworm," the following story from the special correspondent of "The Times" at Rotterdam appeared on April 15. The narrative is by a member of a German "propaganda company."

He said that the naval squadron to which he was attached was steaming at full speed from the Heligoland Bight northwards, escorted by destroyers, when the news came that one of the rearmost destroyers had engaged a British destroyer. The rear cruiser was ordered to join in the attack and at once turned about. The British destroyer, which was soon sighted on the horizon, revealed her identity by signalling a question in English by a flash-lamp. The cruiser answered with fire from all her guns. The destroyer dodged, let out a smoke-screen, and succeeded in manoeuvring within

SUNK BY NORWEGIAN FIRE

Among enemy ships destroyed during the invasion of Norway was the cruiser 'Karlsruhe,' below, hit by the Norwegian coastal batteries and sunk off Kristiansand, a harbour on the Skagerrak

Photo, Central Press



torpedo range. She then fired a salvo of torpedoes, which the cruiser only just avoided by putting her helm hard over. The British destroyer had no chance of delivering a second discharge. She was overwhelmed with shells, and a violent explosion broke her in halves. All the survivors, it is said, were picked up by the cruiser.

At this time hopes were held at the Admiralty that this strong enemy force might be caught between the British force lately engaged in minelaying and the main Home Fleet. Unhappily, the enemy made good their escape. The chances of such an encounter are infinitely more remote at sea than they are on land, when the results of a converging movement can with some certainty be predicted.

On the next day (Tuesday, April 9) the British Fleet was steaming off the Norwegian coast about Bergen when it was very heavily attacked by German aircraft. Two cruisers were slightly damaged, but remained at their stations. One very heavy bomb hit the flagship "Rodney," but her armour withstood the impact, although she suffered some casualties, four officers and three men being injured. The cruiser "Aurora" was subjected to five bombing attacks, all of which failed, but the destroyer "Gurkha" which accompanied her was hit, and sank after 4½ hours. The "Gurkha's" crew was saved.

Weather conditions farther north, off Narvik, were of the worst description when at dawn on the Tuesday the battle-cruiser "Renown" sighted the "Scharnhorst" and a 10,000-ton Hipper-class cruiser in the far distance. It was snowing hard and a gale was raging, but the "Renown" opened fire at 18,000 yards. After replying some three minutes later, the enemy turned away. It was observed that the battle-cruiser had been hit on her forward superstructure, and a column of smoke was seen over her; her guns became silent, though later they resumed firing under local control. The heavy cruiser accompanying her then threw out a smoke screen, and both escaped.

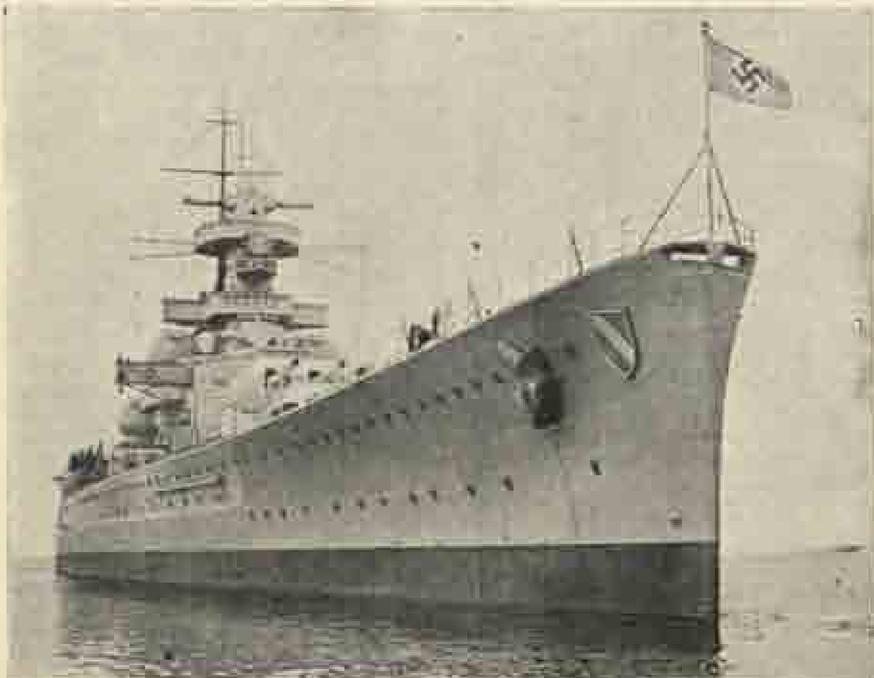
That same afternoon of April 9 the British Second Destroyer Flotilla, commanded by Captain B. A. Warburton-Lee, was in the vicinity of West Fjord, leading into Ofot Fjord, at whose head is the town of Narvik. Learning of the presence of a strong enemy destroyer force in the Ofot Fjord, the British commander sought instructions from London, and was in effect given a free hand on his own responsibility. He replied "Going into action," and by 4.30 a.m. on April 10 the Second Destroyer Flotilla was off Narvik.

The story of the resulting battle is told in Chapter 80. One enemy destroyer out of nine was sunk and three more were left on fire; all were heavier in

German Losses at Sea (April 8-16)

Name	Tons	
Warships		
Admiral Scheer	10,000	Torpedoed and damaged
Bluecher (or **Gneisenau**)	10,000	Sunk (German report said **Bluecher**)
Karlsruhe	6,000	Torpedoed and sunk
Gneisenau	26,000	Sunk (Norwegian official)
Scharnhorst	26,000	Damaged by **Renown**
Emden	5,400	Sunk off Oslo
8 to 11 Destroyers	—	Sunk (varying reports)
1 Light Cruiser	—	Sunk off Bergen (some reports state 2)
1 U-boat	—	Sunk
Tankers, Transports, Merchant and Supply Ships		
***Posidonia**	5,000 (?)	Sunk, April 9
***August Leonhardt**	2,593	—
***Kreta**	2,539	„ April 8
***Rio de Janeiro**	5,261	„ April 8
***Amasis**	7,129	„ April 9
***Ionia**	3,102	„ April 14
Antares	2,593	„
***Moorsund**	321	„ April 12 [sunk]
7 other ships	—	4 torpedoed, 3 reported
6 supply ships	—	Sunk
Rauenfels	—	—
Tanker **Skagerrak**	6,044	Scuttled
Main	7,624	
Tanker **Kattegat**	—	Sunk
Alster	8,514	Captured

* Sunk by British submarines





OPPONENTS IN A RUNNING FIGHT

Some damage was sustained by the British battle-cruiser 'Renown' when she was engaged in a running fight with the 'Scharnhorst' and a 10,000-ton cruiser on April 9, 1940. The 'Scharnhorst' herself was damaged, and was again attacked later. Above is 'Renown,' and top left, the 'Scharnhorst.'

Photos, Associated Press; Charles E. Brown





AFTERMATH OF A NAVAL ACTION

During the crossing to Norway German naval units fall in with H.M. Destroyer 'Glowworm,' and after a sharp engagement with a German warship the 'Glowworm' was sunk. These photographs show: above, a shell bursting in front of the British destroyer, as seen from the enemy craft; left, some of the 'Glowworm's' crew in a rubber lifeboat: below, half drowned British sailors clamber aboard the enemy warship.

Photos, Planet News; Lubinski



armament than the British—having more guns, and of bigger calibre. The flotilla leader "Hardy" was so damaged that she was run ashore; Capt. Warburton-Lee was fatally wounded. An older destroyer, H.M.S. "Hunter," was sunk; "Hotspur" and "Hostile" were damaged, but carried on. During the withdrawal the British flotilla sank the ammunition ship "Rauenfels" and destroyed six transports.

The second battle of Narvik opened on April 13. The Second Flotilla had remained to blockade the enemy in Narvik Fjord. It was reinforced by H.M.S. "Warspite" and a strong force of destroyers, and about noon on the 13th the combined fleet, under Vice-Admiral Whitworth, advanced up the fjord to attack the enemy. Four German destroyers were sunk in Narvik Bay; three others, which fled up Rombaks Fjord, a narrow inlet behind the town of Narvik, were pursued and destroyed. On the British side three destroyers were damaged.

In a fight off Horten on the west coast of Oslo Fjord, on April 10, the Norwegian minelayer "Olav Tryggvason" sank the German cruiser "Emden." The Germans further admitted the loss of the cruiser "Bluecher" by gunfire from shore batteries and Norwegian mines in Oslo Fjord, and also of the "Karlsruhe," which they said had been sunk by Norwegian gunfire off Kristiansand. It was afterwards established, however, that this cruiser had received three torpedoes from H.M. Submarine "Truant." The loss of the "Bluecher" was a severe one, for aboard this ship were the German admiral commanding the sea forces and a German general commanding the army of occupation, together with their staffs. It was believed that out of 1,500 on the vessel there were only 40 survivors.

The pocket battleship "Admiral Scheer" was attacked on April 11 by H.M. Submarine "Spearfish" and was hit by one if not more torpedoes.

British submarines had a great record of success during this fateful April. Thus on April 10 "Triton" put four torpedoes into a large convoy, and "Sunfish" torpedoed and sank a 3,000-ton German supply ship. On April 11 "Triad," penetrating Oslo Fjord, torpedoed and sank a 4,000-ton supply ship; while "Sealion" sank the "August Leonhardt," of 2,593 tons. "Sunfish" accounted for two other supply ships, and "Snapper" also successfully attacked enemy convoys, five of her torpedoes striking home. On April 18 the submarine "Seawolf" attacked a convoy, setting one ship on fire and hitting another with a torpedo.

Allied naval units operating in the North Sea, though scoring substantial successes, did not go unscathed. Among vessels lost by the French was the destroyer "Bison" (2,436 tons), bombed while on escort duty with a troop convoy. The Polish navy cooperating with the British fleet since the beginning of the war lost the destroyer "Grom," engaged in operations off the coast of Norway. The "Grom" was one of three Polish destroyers which had got away from the Baltic just before the outbreak of war.

Loss of 'Bison'

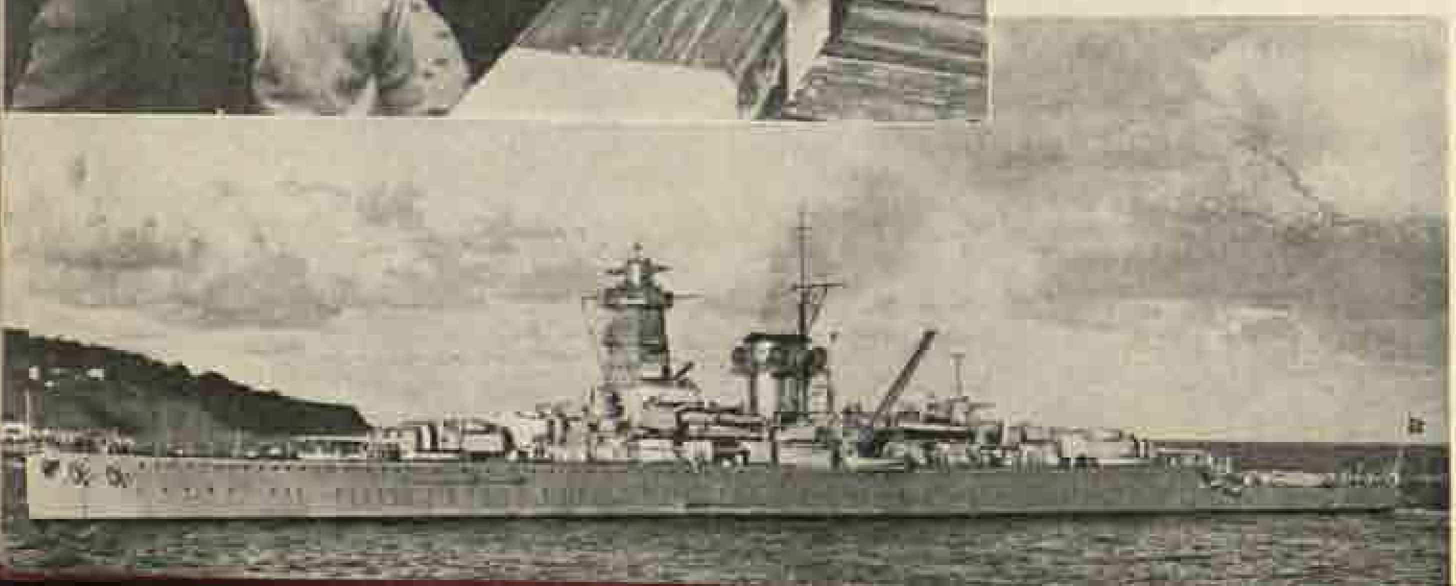
In the House of Commons, on April 11, Mr. Churchill gave an outline of the Navy's doings in Scandinavian waters, and said that the German navy had suffered mutilation in extremely important elements. The Allies were stronger at sea than the enemy, and could control the Mediterranean at the



HEROES OF THE 'SPEARFISH'

On April 11, 1940, the German pocket battleship 'Admiral Scheer' (below) was torpedoed by the British submarine 'Spearfish' and badly damaged. For this feat Lieut.-Commander J. H. Forbes (left) gained the D.S.O.; on August 28, 1940, the Admiralty announced that the 'Spearfish' must be presumed lost.

Photos, "Daily Mirror"; Fox





NAZI BOMB FALLS WIDE OF THE MARK

During an air attack on the British naval units off Bergen on April 9, 1940, a bomb exploded in the sea near H.M.S. 'Rodney,' as seen above. Another bomb fell on the vessel and caused some casualties

Photo, Central Press

same time that we carried on operations in the North Sea. One of the interesting facts revealed by Mr. Churchill was that for a period of five weeks the Home Fleet had again been using the anchorage at Scapa Flow.

The invasion of Norway on April 8 had been preceded by a continued and ruthless attack on her shipping while she could still claim the rights of a neutral power. On April 5 it was announced that, after torpedoing without warning the Norwegian steamer "Navana" (2,118 tons) 30 miles off the north coast of Scotland, a U-boat had cruised about for half an hour without making any attempt to save drowning men.

Next day brought news of British successes against German ships in Scandinavian waters. Three vessels, including one carrying 300-500 troops, had been torpedoed by British submarines in the Skagerrak off Southern Norway. These ships were the "Rio de Janeiro" (5,261 tons), the tanker "Posidonia" (5,000 tons), and the "Kreta" (2,539 tons). Later news told of other German transports and auxiliaries sunk in Scandinavian waters—the "Main" (7,624 tons); the "Antares" (2,593 tons), mined or torpedoed; the "Ionia" (3,102 tons); the "August Leonhardt" (2,593 tons); and the tanker "Moorsund" (321 tons), all sunk by British submarines.

The escape of one convoy was due to the enterprise and resource of Captain Pinkney, of the "Fylingdale," in charge of six British and thirty-one neutral ships in a fjord near Bergen on April 9. Almost ready to sail, they saw the German tanker "Skagerrak" enter the fjord, her decks lined with troops. When she hurriedly made off, Captain Pinkney had his first inkling of what was afoot, and just afterwards received a radio message telling all British ships to leave. He got the convoy going and in due course they met an escort of British warships and made their way safely home.





SMART WORK BY THE 'SNAPPER'

During the Nazi invasion of Norway the British submarine 'Snapper' distinguished herself by sinking four or five German ships off the Norwegian coast. Above are some of the German prisoners landed from the 'Snapper.' Inset, Lieut. W. D. King, of 'Snapper,' photographed after receiving the D.S.O. from the hands of King George.

Photos, Central Press; Keystone

At the beginning of May, owing to the attitude of Italy, British shipping was being diverted from the Mediterranean. On the same day the Admiralty made known the loss of the submarines "Tarpon" (Lt.-Comdr. H. J. Caldwell) and "Sterlet" (Lt.-Comdr. G. H. S. Havard). The "Sterlet" was the most modern of the eight submarines of the "Shark" class, while "Tarpon" was a sister ship of the "Trident," "Triton" and "Truant."

Mediterranean Precautions

Next day came the news of the loss of the sloop "Bittern" (Lt.-Comdr. R. Miles). She had been repeatedly attacked by enemy aircraft, and after prolonged fighting (in which one aircraft





FATE OF A POLISH DESTROYER

When Poland was overwhelmed by the Nazis, certain naval units escaped and joined forces with the Royal Navy. Among these were the destroyers 'Grom' (Thunder) and 'Blyskawica' (Lightning), illustrated in page 389. In the summer of 1940 the 'Grom,' while operating off Narvik, was heavily bombed by German aircraft and sank within two or three minutes. She is seen below in the fjord shortly before the attack. Not content with sinking the destroyer the German airmen deliberately machine-gunned the survivors in the water; one of these hapless targets is seen among wreckage on the left. Fortunately a British destroyer was at hand (top) and her boats were able to pick up all but 66 of the crew.

Photos, G.P.U.



was shot down in flames and others severely handled) was set on fire in Namsos Fjord. This sloop, designed principally for the protection of convoys against air attacks, fought a most gallant battle against great odds. With her ammunition exploding, and stricken by enemy bombs, she continued to fight on until at great hazard her crew were rescued. Next afternoon she was torpedoed and sunk by a British warship to prevent her becoming a danger to navigation.

Other losses off the coast of Norway announced at this time included that of H.M. Destroyer "Afridi" (Capt. P. L. Vian, D.S.O.), bombed and sunk while protecting the convoy containing troops withdrawn from Namsos.

'Afridi' Sunk

"With the arrival of daylight," stated the Admiralty communiqué, "repeated waves of enemy aircraft kept up an incessant attack upon the convoy, but the barrage maintained by the anti-aircraft guns of the escort was so effective that the troop transports were untouched."

Six naval trawlers were also lost off the coast of Norway: the "Warwickshire," the "Cape Chelyuskin," the "Jardine," the "St. Goran," the "Gaul" and "Aston Villa." These craft were damaged by air attack, and it was not deemed advisable for them to cross the North Sea. They were therefore sunk, presumably because there was no time for effective repairs. The casualties were slight. Further naval losses announced during May included H.M.S. "Seal," a minelayer submarine of 1,520 tons surface displacement, and the destroyer "Valentine" (1,100 tons), damaged by air attack off the Dutch coast and subsequently beached with, it was believed, few casualties. Commanded by Commander H. J. Buchanan, Royal Australian Navy, H.M.S. "Valentine" was completed in 1918 and had been converted into an escort vessel. H.M.S. "Whitley" (Lt.-Comdr. J. N. Rolfe) was also damaged by bombs and subsequently sunk. She, too, was an "over-age" destroyer which had been converted into an escort vessel.

Other warships lost during May were H.M.S. "Wessex," a destroyer of 1,100 tons, sunk after enemy air attack off the French coast; the minesweeping trawler "Charles Boyer" and the minelayer "Princess Victoria," both sunk by enemy mines; and the naval trawlers "Melbourne" and "Cape Passaro." The most serious casualty of the period was the 10,000-ton cruiser "Effingham" (Capt. J. M. Houston), which became a total loss through striking an uncharted rock off the Norwegian coast.

To set off against these losses there was a magnificent record of successes by Allied submarines, troopships and supply ships off Norway. Between

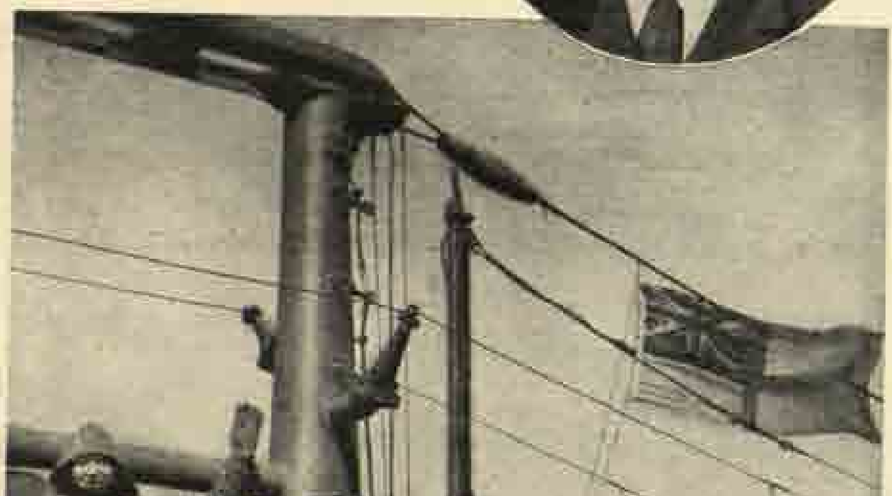


NAVAL LOSSES IN NORWAY

One of the most serious British naval casualties of the Norwegian campaign was when H.M.S. 'Effingham' (above) became a total loss through striking an uncharted rock off the coast of Norway.

Photo, Wright & Logan





VICTORIA CROSS FOR THE ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE

The first British naval detachment landed at Namsos on April 14, and British troops were finally withdrawn on May 1, 1940. During that time such "outstanding valour and devotion to duty" were shown by Lieut. R. B. Stannard, R.N.R. (circle), of H.M. Trawler 'Arab,' that he was subsequently awarded the V.C. His most notable feat was the establishment of an armed camp on shore close to his ship. Although in five days the 'Arab' sustained 31 bombing attacks, and the camp and Lewis-gun positions were repeatedly machine-gunned and bombed, only one man was wounded. Magnificent work was also done in Norwegian waters by British submarines. Above is 'Sunfish,' which sank four German ships during April alone; her captain, Lieut.-Commander J. Slaughter, waves a greeting on the vessel's safe return home.

Photos, G.P.U.; Topical

May 1 and May 15 at least nine German transport and supply ships were sunk, in addition to a 5,000-ton supply ship chased ashore and shelled by H.M.S. "Trident" on May 2. The work of the submarines was done under exceptionally difficult circumstances, to which calm weather conditions, a bright moon, and the constant activity of enemy air patrols and surface vessels all contributed. And against our naval losses also should be counted the comparative immunity of British merchant shipping during this period. The total sinkings for April were in fact 18,249 tons, while world tonnage losses amounted to 41,677 tons, the smallest monthly figure since the war began. Up to May 1, 19,098 merchant ships had been convoyed by the British Navy, of which 31 (or one in 616) were lost by enemy action. The French figures were 3,457 ships convoyed with seven losses.

The invasion of Holland and Belgium on May 10 brought immediate tasks to the Royal Navy—such as assisting the evacuation of the Dutch Royal Family, a dash by motor torpedo boats into the Zuyder Zee, laying of mines, destruction of oil dumps, and the blocking of the port of Ymuiden, to the west of Amsterdam. Magnetic mines had been laid by the enemy at the entrances to most of the Dutch ports, but the British minesweepers were able to deal with them and to enable a great deal of shipping to escape. Enemy air attacks on the minesweepers brought little success. Prompt and successful work was also done by British minelayers, who within two hours of the enemy onslaught were laying mines in vital places along the seaboard of the Low Countries.



CONVOY CAPTAIN

Capt. John Short Pinkney, of the S.S. "Fylingdale," who showed great daring and enterprise in extricating a convoy from a Bergen fjord. He was awarded the O.B.E.

Photo, Topical

A flotilla of motor torpedo boats was dispatched from the East Coast to hamper any German attempt to cross the Zuyder Zee—which is very shallow—but within twelve hours of the arrival of this flotilla it became obvious that Amsterdam must fall, and the flotilla was obliged to withdraw past blazing oil tanks along a canal almost blocked by small craft. The motor torpedo boats were heavily attacked by German aircraft, but replied effectively, bringing down at least one German aeroplane.

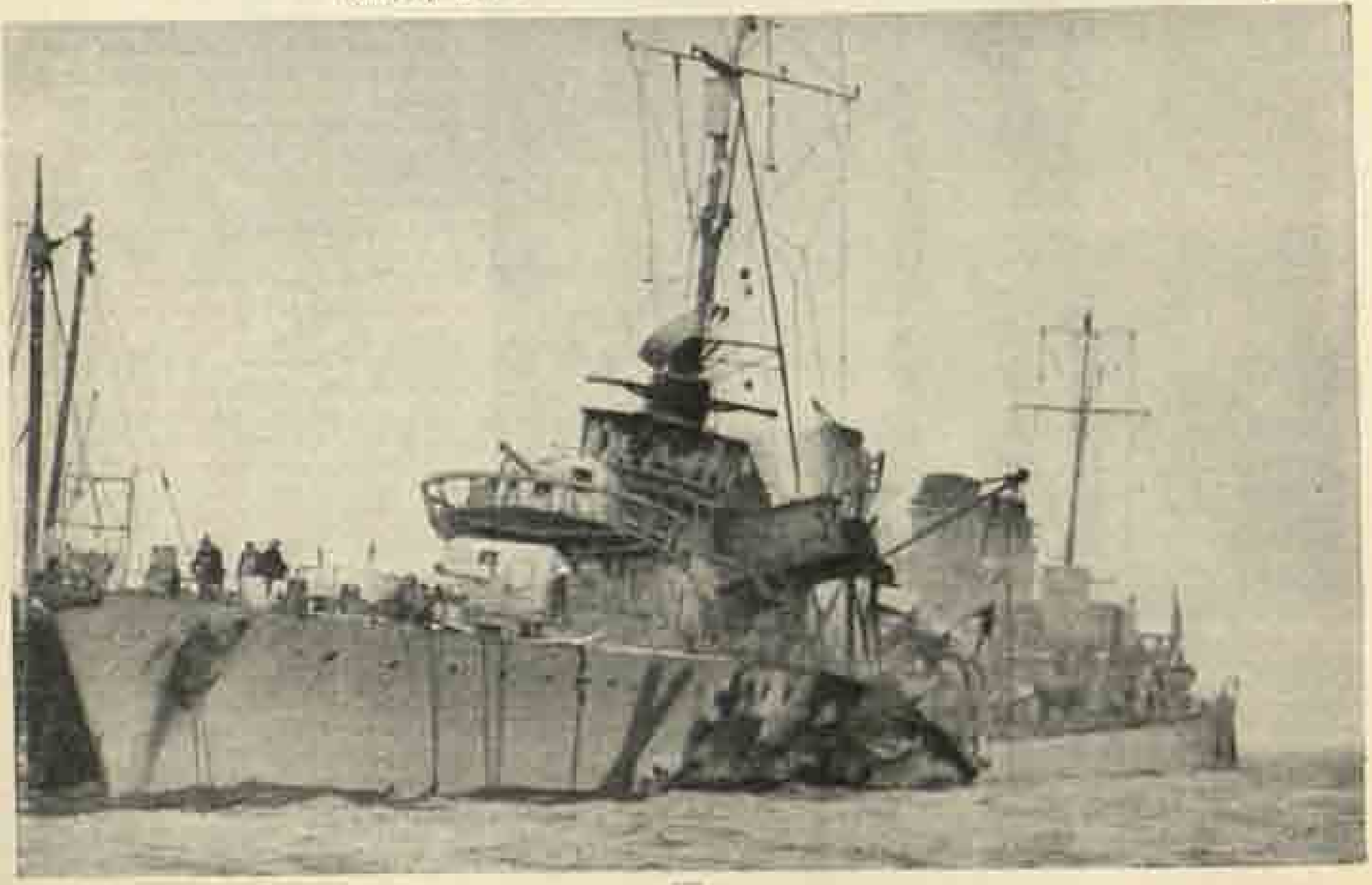
The work of the naval landing parties was invaluable. Their task was to fire the oil storage tanks and to wreck ports as far as possible—a mission carried out by the express desire of the Dutch authorities. Huge columns of smoke and flames in the sky testified to its success.

At Ymuiden a merchant vessel full of iron ore, together with a trawler, was sunk in the southern entrance to the port. Two floating docks collapsed; cranes, hoppers, dredgers and barges were sunk in the deepest part. After the lock gates had been closed the machinery operating them was destroyed by high explosive. A 12,000-ton liner was sunk at the other entrance to the

SHIP THAT BLEW UP IN THE NIGHT

In April, 1940, the French destroyer 'Maillé Brézé,' of 2,441 tons, blew up as she lay at anchor off a British port. There was heavy loss of life. Below, the damaged destroyer is seen after the disaster and shortly before she sank

Photo, Topical Press





BRITAIN WELCOMES DUTCH ESCAPERS

Above, one of the many Dutch trawlers which put into English ports when their country was invaded. Below, the newly built Dutch submarines O.22 and O.24 which dodged enemy mines and successfully reached the English coast. Right, Dutch soldiers climbing aboard a British destroyer from their bombed ship.

Photos, Central Press ; "News Chronicle" ; Keystone





harbour, an iron foundry blown up, and a flotilla of hoppers sunk—thus, it was said, "completing a thoroughly efficient job carried out in the shortest possible time."

The accession of many valuable Dutch naval units to the Allied forces was one encouraging result of the Dutch surrender to Germany. These vessels comprised four cruisers, eight destroyers, 26 submarines, 10 torpedo boats, and a considerable number of miscellaneous warships. One of the biggest cruisers, the 6,670-ton "Sumatra," immediately joined the British Fleet in the North Sea.

One of the most stirring stories of the invasion of Holland was of the escape of two Dutch submarines. In the words of Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty:

"A particularly desperate and gallant exploit was performed by submarines O.22 and O.24. These vessels had only just completed building at Rotterdam and although they had not been degaussed (equipped against magnetic mines) and it was known that the waterway was full of magnetic mines, their officers were determined to get them and prevent them from falling into German hands. If they were blown up, the object would be achieved and they would have helped to block the fairway.

"However, by skilful handling, the commanding officers succeeded in dodging the mines and getting them to the open sea, whence they proceeded to England. Thanks to such acts of bravery and determination, a very valuable part of the Netherlands Navy has been preserved to fight on with the other Allied Naval Forces until the common enemy is defeated."









HOME FRONT HOARDINGS ADMONISH THE NATION

Organizers of many branches of the vast British war effort were not slow to enlist the powerful aid of poster publicity to point their appeals to the people. Representative examples are here seen which, with those reproduced in pages 538 and 551, cover the period September, 1939, to summer, 1940. From the view-point of design, some of these posters were scarcely outstanding, but they did contrive to fulfil their primary purpose of conveying messages to the public. Points of interest were the use of photographic material in some compositions, and the commendable breakaway from Army tradition in the A.M.P.C. appeal.

















THE HOME FRONT DURING THE EARLY MONTHS OF 1940

Agreement With the Railways—Subsidies for Essential Food Supplies—Evacuation Plans—Progress of War Savings Campaign—Cabinet Reorganized—Paper Shortage—Simon's Second War Budget—Growing Dissatisfaction With Government's Policy—A Change Demanded

THE early months of 1940 were marked by no sensational developments on the Home Front. The reiterated assertions of many in high places that time was on our side, and that we had only to continue the Sitzkrieg behind the bulwark of the impregnable Maginot Line to wear out the Nazis, had bred a feeling of complacency which acted as a brake on the national effort—a complacency which was to be rudely jolted at the end of the spring, when the Blitzkrieg which the Polish campaign should have prepared us for burst in all its fury.



MUNITIONS FACTORY EXPLOSION

On Jan. 18, 1940, an explosion took place at the Royal Powder Factory, Waltham Abbey, Essex, in which five people lost their lives and thirty were injured. Above, a church in the district which had many of its stained glass windows blown out.

Photo, Sport & General

But the country was still, as it were, sluggish from the black-out and the rigours of an exceptionally hard winter. The reports from the Western Front were laconic in the extreme: a stalemate seemed to have been reached. Britain felt inclined to lean back and wait for the blockade to win the war. The Home Front went ahead, it is true, with its efforts, but the nation had not yet learned to "Go to it!"

On February 7, 1940, were published the financial arrangements between the Government and the four main-line railways and the London Passenger Transport Board which arose out of the control of these undertakings by the Ministry of Transport. Receipts and expenses were to be pooled (with certain minor exceptions), and out of the pool the transport concerns were to be paid annual sums, equivalent in the case of the railway companies to the average of their net revenues for the years 1935, 1936 and 1937, and in the case of the L.P.T.B., to its net revenue for the year ended June 30, 1939. Payment of these sums was guaranteed by the Government.

An important Declaration of Policy was issued on February 9 by the National Executive of the Labour Party, which called upon the British people to contribute their utmost effort to the overthrow of the Hitler system in Germany. The Labour Party, this declaration affirmed, "unreservedly supports the Allied war of resistance to Nazi aggression because, though loathing war, it regards this war as a lesser evil than the slavery which finally would be the only alternative." There followed a statement of the broad lines of settlement which the Party wanted to see reached after the defeat of Hitlerism, among which the chief points were: freedom and restitution for the nations overrun by Nazi tyranny; equal opportunity of access for all peoples to raw materials and markets in Colonial territories; bold economic and financial planning on a world-wide scale; and the right of all nations to live their own lives within the new world-order.

In the House of Commons on February 8 Sir John Simon announced that the Government had agreed to spend £58,000,000 annually in subsidies for wheat, milk, meat and bacon in order to prevent an undue rise in the cost of these essential foodstuffs. He explained that rationing had to go hand in hand with this policy of Government subsidy, lest the relative cheapness of these commodities should lead to an undue consumption of them.

New plans for the evacuation of schoolchildren in the event of serious



WHEN COAL WAS SCARCE

The severe winter of 1939-40 affected the transport of fuel. Below is one of 143 special coal trains which replaced certain passenger services as soon as the thaw came, and enabled householders in the south to replenish their supplies. Left, Lord Portal, Chairman of the Coal Production Council





industries or essential to nourish our people." He urged economy in the use of food, since purchases of foodstuffs from abroad were the biggest item in foreign spending, and the necessity of growing more food at home. He stressed also the need of buying with discretion, and foreshadowed further increases in taxation. As a gratifying commentary on Sir Samuel Hoare's speech, the Board of Trade returns for January, 1940, showed an increase of £1,593,976 on exports as compared with January, 1939.

ings Certificates. Four days later Sir John Simon announced the issue of a war loan of £300,000,000 carrying interest at 3 per cent, issued at par and redeemable at par in October, 1959. On March 18 he told the House that the loan had been over-subscribed.

War Finance

Further figures of war finance were given by Sir John Simon, when moving the Vote of Credit for a sum not exceeding £700,000,000 for war expenditure during the year ending March 31, 1941. At that time the three Defence Services and the Ministry of Supply between them were spending some £4,000,000 a day, and other war services such as evacuation, A.R.P., shipping, etc., were spending nearly a million pounds a day. When other expenses of the Government were taken into account the country, said Sir John Simon, was spending at a rate of £6,500,000 a day. Even this huge figure was soon to be greatly exceeded. The Agricultural Wages (Amendment) Bill, introduced on March 12, provided for the fixing of a national minimum weekly wage. The Bill



AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS

Above, in the control room of London Area's Civil Defence organization during an air raid rehearsal, a plotting officer is registering localities which have been supposedly damaged. Right, a Lambeth A.R.P. warden wears a white "tin hat," easily seen during "black-out" hours.

Photos, Fox

PIONEERS AT WORK

It was on Oct. 26, 1939, that recruiting for the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps opened, and a large campaign for the Corps was set on foot in April, 1940, with excellent results. Formed of volunteers between the ages of 35 and 50, the A.M.P.C. did fine work during the Battle of France. Below pioneers are erecting barbed wire entanglements on the East Coast.

Photo, Barratt



air raids were announced by the Minister of Health, Mr. Walter Elliot, on February 15. This was to be a voluntary evacuation, but parents who registered were to sign an undertaking that they would send their children when ordered to do so and that they would allow them to remain in the reception areas until the school parties returned. This was a necessary step, since many of the children who had been evacuated at the beginning of the war had been brought back from the reception areas by parents who had either been unwilling to remain parted from their children—a natural if short-sighted view—or had considered the danger from air raids to be overrated.

Sir Samuel Hoare, Lord Privy Seal, in a speech at Nottingham on February 17, reviewed the nation's effort on the Home Front. He stressed the need for the proper equipment of our fighting forces and for the maintenance of our export trade. "If we do not have the income from the sale of exports to countries overseas," he said, "we cannot expect to maintain through a long struggle our purchase of the commodities that are vital to our war

Nation's Effort Reviewed

The War Office announced on February 26 that, as from March 11, North Scotland (the counties of Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty, part of Inverness and Argyll, and the Inner and Outer Hebrides) would become a "protected area" under the Defence Regulations. No persons would be allowed to enter the area except those with official permits and permanent residents other than enemy aliens.

The War Savings campaign continued to make steady progress, and on March 1, 1940, the National Savings Committee were able to state that savings had reached a total of £100,000,000, made up of £50,500,000 in Defence Bonds and £49,500,000 in War Sav-





LONDON WARTIME NOTES, EARLY IN 1940

1, Sandbagged Eros, in Piccadilly Circus, surrounded by cut-outs of the once familiar flower-sellers. 2, An office building in Kingsway with sandbags and windows neatly boarded in. 3, A barrage balloon at its moorings in a quiet London street. 4, Surface shelters in the Haymarket. 5, First Aid Post and Trench Shelter location signs on a lamp-post. 6, A War Reserve constable on duty at a sandbagged police box in the Strand. 7, An Information Office for the Forces in Trafalgar Square.

















NORTHERN IRELAND PLAYS ITS PART

In this page are photographs of Northern Ireland's war activities. Above, land adjoining Parliament Buildings being ploughed for food. Above, left, young gunners of the Fleet Air Arm receiving instruction. Left, crew of an A.A. gun station operating a range-finder and predictor in concrete emplacements. Below, left, girls of a flax-spinning mill examining khaki linen handkerchiefs for the troops. Large quantities of clothing material for the armed forces were produced in Northern Ireland's mills. Below, fitting and pressing on copper driving bands for small shells.

Photos, Fox









WHERE A MINELAYING 'PLANE BLEW UP

Four members of the crew and three civilians were killed and over 160 people were injured as the result of explosions which followed the crash of a German minelaying aircraft at Clacton-on-Sea on the night of April 30-May 1, 1940. Above, the scene of the crash, showing the destruction caused. Left, an engine of the German aircraft.
Photos, Central Press; "Daily Mirror"

established the principle for which agricultural workers had long been pleading—i.e. that a minimum wage should be fixed by a central body, instead of by County Committees. The central body in which was embodied the power of fixing these rates was the Central Agricultural Wages Board, but the County Committees were given leave to appeal to the Board if they felt that agricultural circumstances in their area made it impossible for farmers to pay this national minimum wage.

Storm Over Supply Ministry

During March a storm broke over the head of the Ministry of Supply on the question of alleged commission-seeking by certain persons who claimed to have special access to the Ministry. Mr. Herbert Morrison cited cases in which would-be intermediaries had approached firms and offered their services to obtain contracts from the Ministry.

Mr. Leslie Burgin drew a distinction between the regular business practice of remunerating agents by commission and the practice of attempting to bribe servants of the Crown. At all events, new regulations were put into force, making it an offence for any individual, in an attempt to gain some monetary advantage for himself, to represent that he was in a position to influence any person in the service of any Government department.

On April 3 Downing Street announced a reorganization of the Cabinet, and the following appointments, amongst others, were approved by the King: Lord Privy Seal, Sir Kingsley Wood; Secretary of State for Air, Sir Samuel Hoare; Minister of Food, Lord Woolton; Postmaster-General, Mr. W. S. Morrison; Minister of Shipping, Mr. R. S. Hudson; President of the Board of Education, Mr. Herwald Ramsbotham. No Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence was appointed in the place of Lord Chatfield, who left the Cabinet. One of the most interesting appointments was that of Lord Woolton, a well-known business man and chairman of Lewis's Ltd.

A sidelight on the economic war was afforded in a Parliamentary reply given on April 4, informing the House of the Government's decision to set up, under the chairmanship of Lord Swinton, a special trading company, financed by the Treasury and known as the English Commercial Corporation, Ltd., to assist in developing British trade with the Balkans.

The following day the Ministry of Mines announced the creation of a Coal Production Council. Its object was to increase British coal exports and maintain the supplies essential for the vast war work in progress on the Home Front. The Council was to be presided over by Lord Portal and would include representatives both of workmen and employers, as well as officials of the Ministries of Shipping, Mines, and Transport.

More Protected Areas

On April 15 the Aliens (Protected Areas) Order came into force. It declared eight areas adjoining important naval ports to be protected areas under the Aliens Order, 1920. No alien ordinarily resident in a protected area on March 29, 1940, could remain there without written authority from the Chief Constable of the district or from the Secretary of State. Similar permission was needed by visiting aliens. These protected areas (to which later others were added) were: Humber, Harwich, Medway, Thames, Dover, Portsmouth, Plymouth, North of Scotland, the Orkneys and Shetlands, and the Firth of Forth.

During this month, owing to the German invasion of Norway and the cutting off of Swedish supplies to this country, the shortage of paper became acute and a "Control of Paper" Order was issued, rationing the amount of paper and paper-board supplied by the paper mills to their customers. The rationing was drastic, reducing supplies to 30 per cent of the amount supplied or manufactured in the similar period during 1939. An immediate result was a big cut in the size of newspapers.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir John Simon, presented his second War Budget to the House of Commons on April 23. Among the heavy taxation made necessary by the war the following

were notable items. Income Tax, 7s. 6d. in the £, surtax liability from £1,500 upwards; increase in the duties on tobacco, beer and spirits, matches and mechanical lighters, and an increase in postal, telephone and telegraph charges. The Chancellor also announced the introduction of a Purchase Tax, to be levied on all sales, with the exception of essential commodities such as foodstuffs, fuel, gas, electricity and water. The tax, which met with considerable criticism, was designed to restrict internal spending. The Chancellor's estimated demand for the financial year 1940–41 was £2,666,790,000. The revenue yield on the existing basis was £1,133,028,000, leaving an additional £1,533,762,000 to be found.

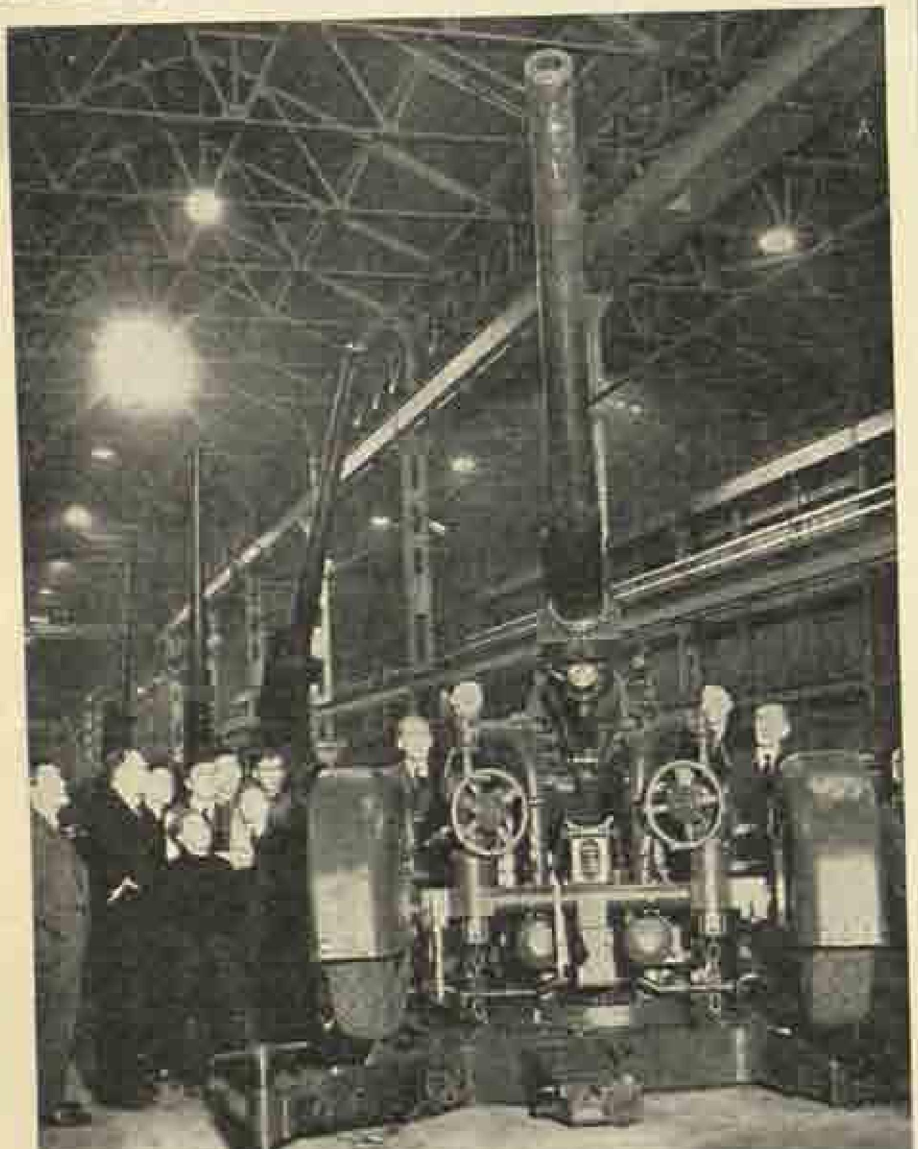
The Budget was debated in the House on April 24–25, and the general criticism seemed to be that the taxation envisaged did not go far enough in view of the enormous war needs of the nation. Mr. Dalton insisted that the Exchequer was spending too slowly on the war effort, which he stigmatized as gravely insufficient. Mr. Pethick Lawrence opposed the Purchase Tax on the ground that it would drive up the cost of living and be open to grave abuse. However, a resolution by Sir John Simon that the Purchase Tax should be agreed to was finally passed by 145 votes to 46.



WOMEN WORK FOR THE NAVY

At an important factory in the south of England engaged on naval contracts, women were employed on certain processes connected with boat building. Above, a girl, protected against fumes, is spraying deck planking with preservative.

Photo, G.P.U.



TERROR OF ENEMY RAIDERS

Here, in an ordnance factory in the Midlands, are completed 3.7 anti-aircraft guns of the type which made such a good show against the Nazi raiders. The craftsmen standing round have some reason to feel proud of their work.

Photo, Topical

The beginning of May, 1940, saw growing dissatisfaction in the country over what was regarded as the complacent attitude adopted by the Government with regard to the conduct of the war in general—a dissatisfaction which came to a head when it was learned that the British forces had been compelled to evacuate Norway. In the great debate in the House of Commons on May 11, which led to a change of Government, reference was made primarily to the strategic conduct of military and naval operations; but dissatisfaction with the way the war was being conducted on the Home Front was forcibly expressed by Mr. Hicks, the Member for East Woolwich. He stressed the point that the various Departments concerned with war industries and supply had not expanded their ideas and organization to keep pace with the growth of the country's needs, and that they failed to consult, as they might have done, the leading representatives of British industry. He gave instances of bad organization and difficulties in the supply of labour.

On a vote of confidence the Government obtained a majority, but it was so small that, taken in conjunction with the temper of the House during the debate, the need for a thorough reorganization was shown to be imperative.

Historic Documents. CVI–CX

CHANGES AND CHANCES AT HOME

The spring of 1940 saw the British people completely united in their determination to win the war against Nazism. We give below excerpts from advice to custodians of the nation's food supplies, the text of a Franco-British undertaking so soon to be rendered void, and the moving speeches of Mr. Chamberlain after resigning from the Premiership, and of Mr. Churchill when he assumed office.

Sir Samuel Hoare, Lord Privy Seal, in a Broadcast Message to Farmers, March 11, 1940:

From all sides I hear tell of the ploughs going up and down night and day. From all sides I hear of big farmers and smallholders, and the man with the spade who digs his own allotment, pushing on with the work. From one of the biggest counties I hear that they intend far to exceed their quota; from another county that they will finish in 23 ploughing days. . . . Let us lighten our ships' burden of foreign food, and by this means free our hands for victory in the war, and make our land richer and stronger for the days of peace. For the harvest will surely come with its reward for those who have worked for it, for our men under arms, and for our workers at home, and not least among them you men and women on the land of Britain. Not then in vain will have been the toil of sowing, the watching and waiting, the troubles and anxieties of war. For the end of a victorious war will be the greatest harvest home that the world has ever seen.

Declaration issued after a Meeting of the Supreme Wa Council in London, March 28, 1940:

The Government of the French Republic and his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland mutually undertake that during the present war they will neither negotiate nor conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement.

They undertake not to discuss peace terms before reaching complete agreement on the conditions necessary to ensure to each of them an effective and lasting guarantee of their security.

Finally, they undertake to maintain, after the conclusion of peace, a community of action in all spheres for so long as may be necessary to safeguard their security and to effect the reconstruction, with the assistance of other nations, of an international order which will ensure the liberty of peoples, respect for law and the maintenance of peace in Europe.

Lord Woolton, Minister of Food, at a Meeting in the Queen's Hall, April 5, 1940:

Today, in my first speech as Minister of Food, I am going to call on the women of England to mobilise themselves on the Kitchen Front. It doesn't sound romantic; it doesn't sound grand; it isn't dangerous work—but it is vital to our victory. I want the women of England to go into training for the days which may come when the whole staying power of the nation will depend on them being able to keep up the energy and the spirits of the industrial workers of this country by feeding them sufficiently when supplies are difficult, when things they have been accustomed to eat and to use in cooking are no longer available. . . . We have to experiment now, when it is not necessary, so that we can be ready. We cannot be carefree because we have got the food; we must husband it, and while we are in this happy position we must consider and prepare for the future, looking at it at the worst.

Mr. Chamberlain, in a Speech Broadcast after his Resignation, May 10, 1940:

Early this morning, without warning or excuse, Hitler added another to the horrible crimes which already disgrace his name by a sudden attack on Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg. In all history no other man has been responsible for such a hideous toll of human suffering and misery as he.

He has chosen a moment when perhaps it seemed to him that this country was entangled in the throes of a political crisis and when he might find it divided against itself. If he has counted on our internal divisions to help him he has miscalculated the minds of this people.

I am not now going to make any comment on the debate of the House of Commons which took place on Tuesday and Wednesday. But when it was over I had no doubt in my mind that some new and drastic action must be taken if confidence was to be restored in the House of Commons and the war carried on with the vigour and energy essential to victory.

It was clear that at this critical moment in the war what was needed was the formation of a Government which would include members of the Liberal and Labour Opposition, and thus present a united front to the enemy.

By this afternoon it was apparent that the essential unity could be secured under another Prime Minister. In these circumstances my duty was plain. I sought an audience of the King this evening and tendered to him my resignation, which his Majesty has been pleased to accept.

The King has now entrusted to my friend and colleague, Mr. Winston Churchill, the task of forming a new Administration on a national basis, and in this task I have no doubt he will be successful. . . .

The hour has come when we are to be put to the test, as the innocent people of Holland and Belgium and France are being tested already, and you and I must rally behind our new leader, and with our united strength and with unshakable courage fight and work until this wild beast that has sprung out of his lair upon us is finally disarmed and overthrown.

Mr. Churchill, in a Speech in the House of Commons, May 13, 1940:

On Friday evening last I received his Majesty's commission to form a new Administration. It was the evident wish and will of Parliament and the nation that this should be conceived on the broadest possible basis and that it should include all parties, both those who supported the late Government and also the parties of the Opposition.

I have completed the most important part of this task. A War Cabinet has been formed of five members representing, with the Opposition Liberals, the unity of the nation. The three party Leaders have agreed to serve, either in the War Cabinet or in high executive office. The three Fighting Services have been filled. It was necessary that this should be done in one single day, on account of the extreme urgency and rigour of events. A number of other positions, other key positions, were filled yesterday, and I am submitting a further list to his Majesty tonight. . . .

To form an Administration of this scale and complexity is a serious undertaking in itself, but it must be remembered that we are in the preliminary stage of one of the greatest battles in history and that we are in action at many other points—in Norway and in Holland, that we have to be prepared in the Mediterranean, that the air battle is continuous, and that many preparations have to be made here at home. . . .

I would say to the House as I said to those who have joined this Government: "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat." We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many, many long months of struggle and of suffering. You ask what is our policy; I will say: "It is to wage war, by sea, land, and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us, and to wage war against a monstrous tyranny, never surpassed in the dark, lamentable catalogue of human crime." That is our policy.

You ask what is our aim: I can answer in one word: It is victory—victory at all costs—victory in spite of all terrors—victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory there is no survival—let that be realized—no survival for the British Empire, no survival for all that the British Empire has stood for, no survival for the urge and impulse of the ages, that mankind will move forward towards its goal.

I take up my task with buoyancy and hope, and I feel sure that our cause will not be suffered to fail among men. At this time I feel entitled to claim the aid of all, and I say: "Come, then, let us go forward together with our united strength."

BATTLE OF THE WEST: (1) THE NAZI INVASION OF HOLLAND

Hitler's Western Offensive Begins—Bombing of The Hague—Parachute Troops and Troop-carrying Warplanes—Fifth Columnists Aid the Seizure of Rotterdam—Failure of the Water Defences—Queen Wilhelmina Flees to Britain—Germans Capture the Moerdyk Bridge—Air Squadrons Plough Furrows of Destruction Through Rotterdam—Dutch Army Gives In

(See Chapter 144 for a revaluation of the campaign in Holland, based on information which later became available)

Oft threatened, long delayed, several times postponed, Hitler's western offensive was launched on May 10—that offensive which in the course of five days would overwhelm Holland, in eighteen days submerge Belgium, and before June had half run its course bring about the collapse of France as a military power.

If some observer possessed of a penetrative vision of superhuman capacity could have looked down on Western Europe in the early hours of that Friday morning he would have seen moving across the German plain in the direction of Holland, Belgium, and Luxemburg, five great armies—seventy or a hundred divisions of men equipped with the most efficient machinery of modern war. Like a flood the grey-green hordes moved on until the frontier was obliterated. Here and there the advancing columns were checked for a moment, but ere long the stream of men moved on.

For some days before, the Dutch had believed that the German attack was imminent, and they had done all in their power to prepare for it. Their lines of defence were fully manned, the lock-gates of their famous Water Line were ready to be opened at an instant's notice, and already, indeed, considerable areas of the countryside had been flooded; their main roads had been mined, their open spaces covered with obstacles so as to make them unusable by aircraft, their bridges and every other vital point were under an armed guard. They did what they could, but a few hours sufficed to prove that their preparations were pitifully inadequate to withstand the storm which soon swept over the country and its people like a tornado of fire and steel.

Nazi warplanes were reported to have crossed the Dutch frontier on May 10 soon after 2.30 a.m. By 3 a.m. bombs were dropped on the chief civil and military aerodromes. The main attack was made on Rotterdam, but every other place of importance, every vital centre of communications, was similarly treated. Heavy damage was caused by the descending bombs and by the fires to which they gave rise. Many aerodromes were captured by parachute troops dropped from the sky by waves of troop-carrying warplanes. Parachutists in uniforms of the Allies descended upon Dordrecht; others in various disguises appeared at Rotterdam and other places. The first of the parachutists stumbled to earth shortly after four o'clock, and in a short time not only was The Hague encircled but all the principal strategic centres, all the

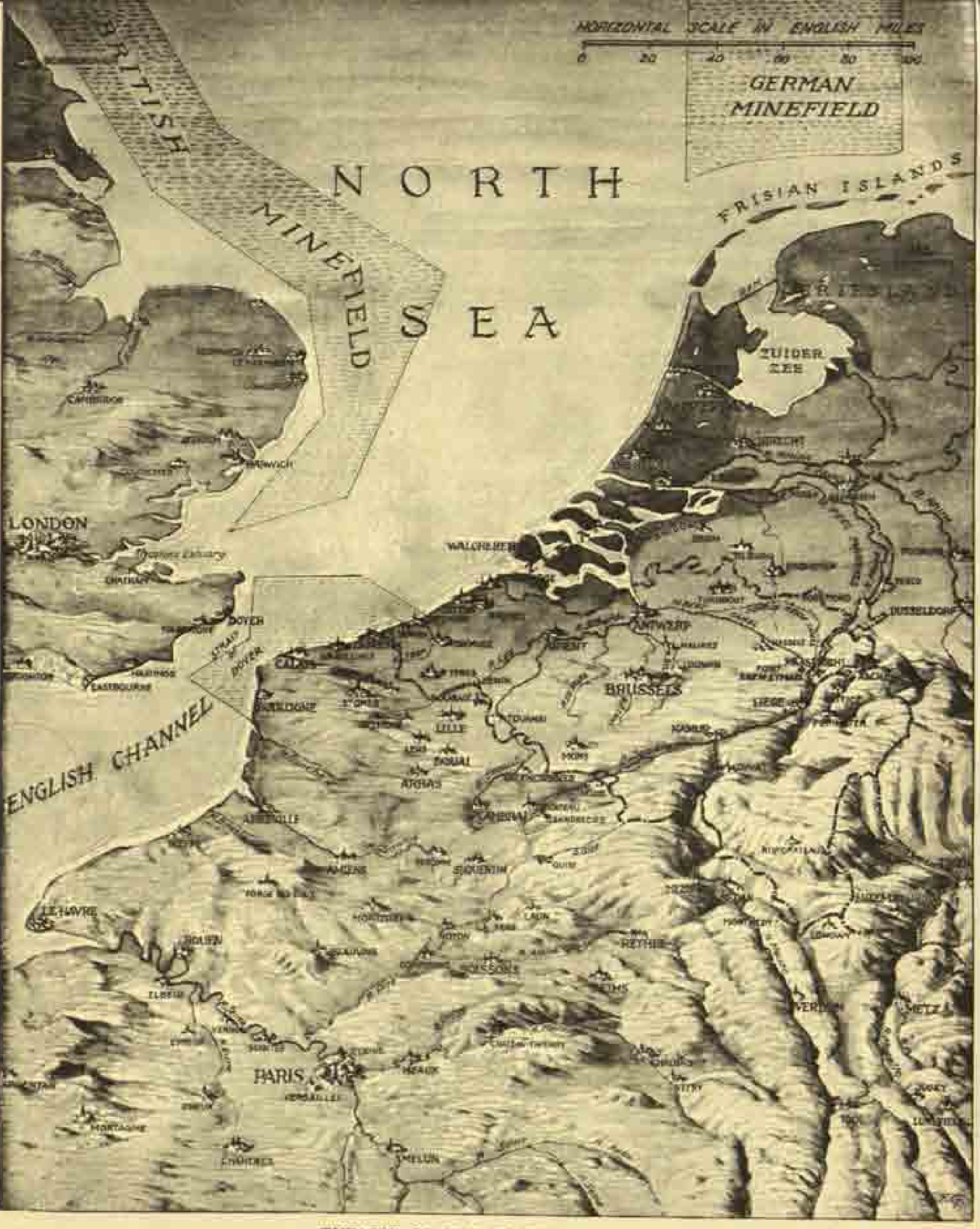




HOLLAND'S FIRST DAY OF TOTAL WAR

In the early hours of Friday, May 10, 1940, German bombers rained high explosive bombs on Amsterdam. Troops were seen patrolling the streets warning residents to stay indoors. Some of the heaviest bomb damage was in the neighbourhood of the Heerengracht Canal, and on the left is a section of the wrecked embankment near the Blauwburgwal.

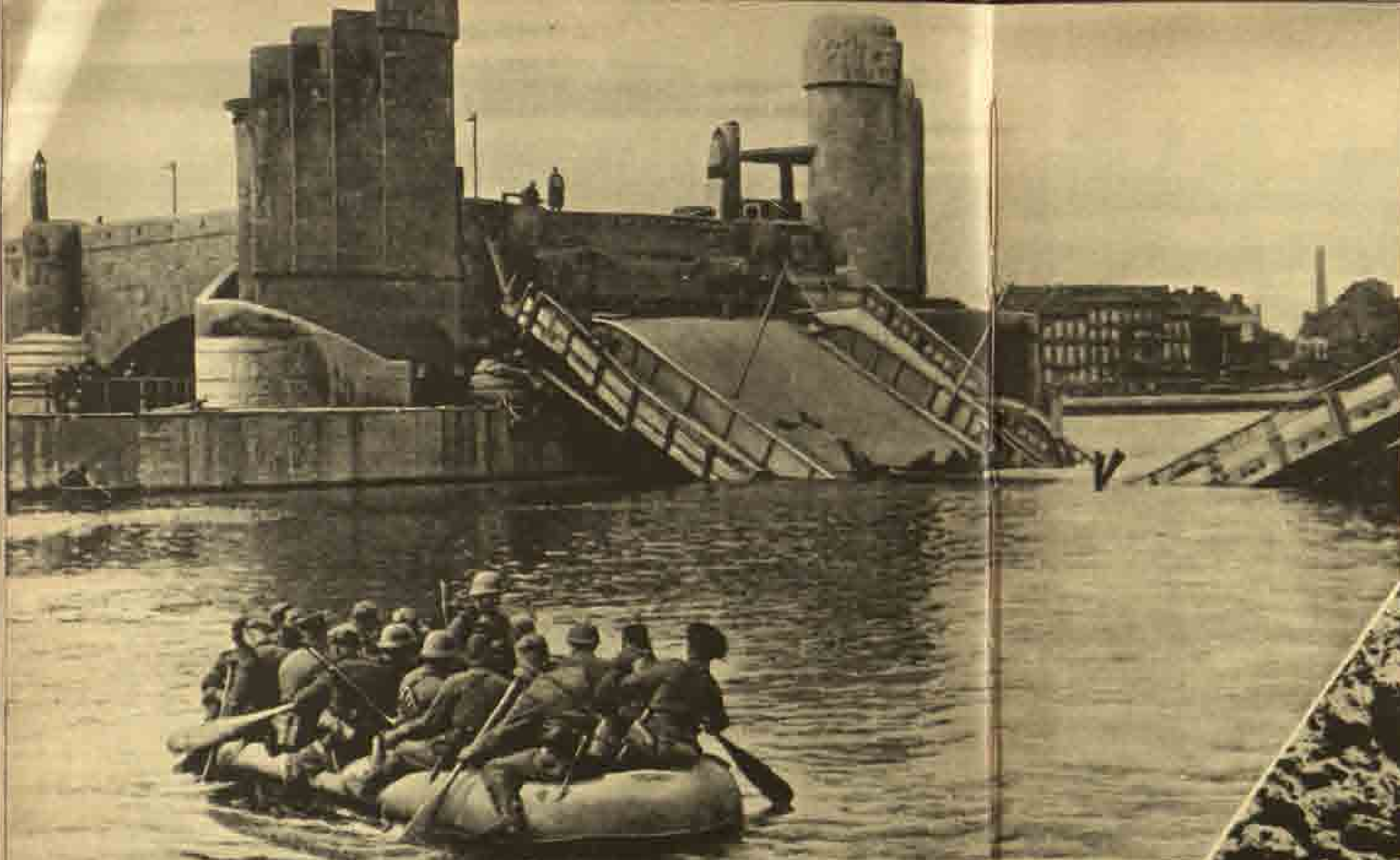
Photos, Keystone; Wide World

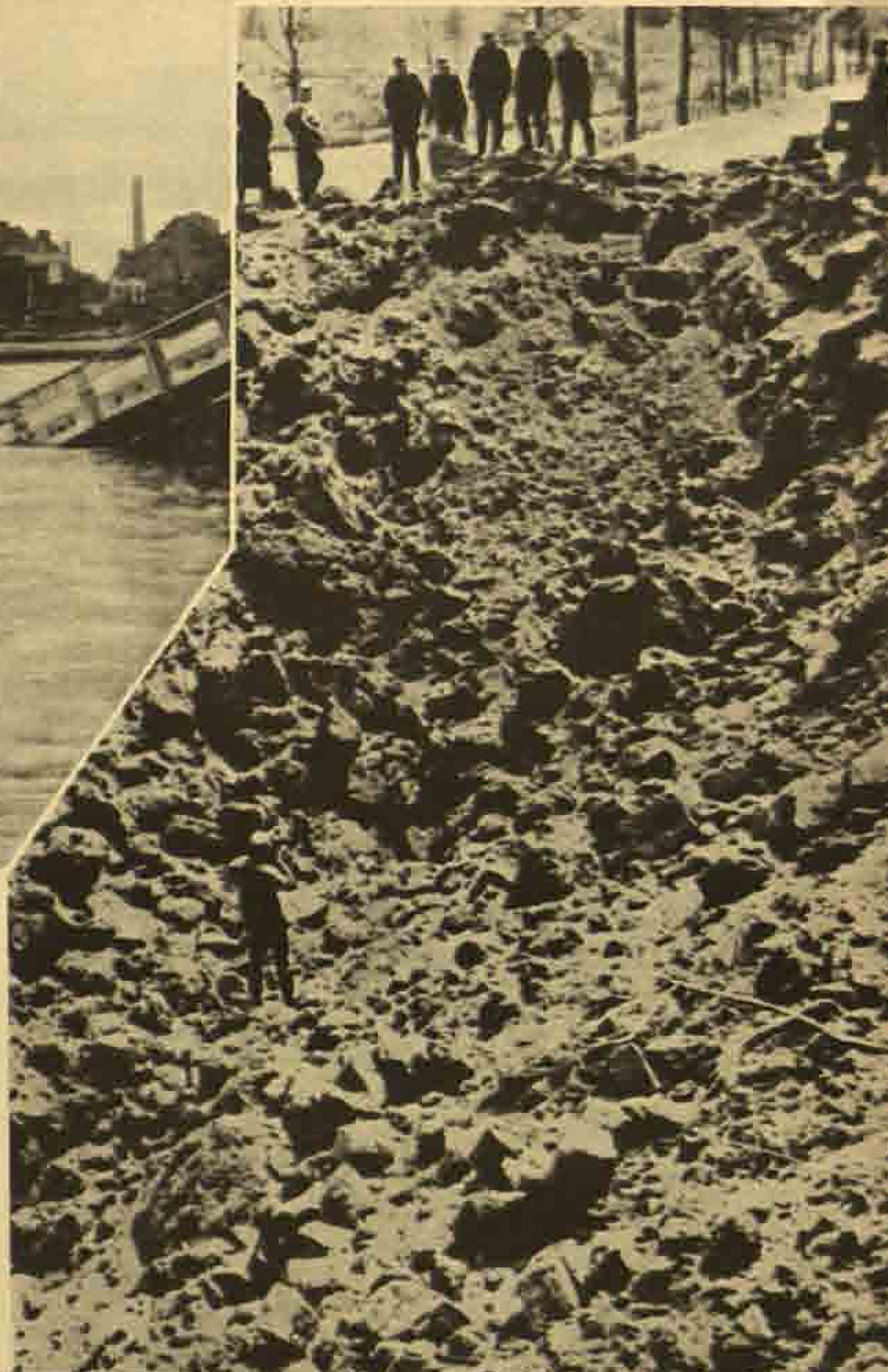


THEATRE OF WAR IN THE WEST, MAY-JUNE, 1940

This map covers the whole field of action involved in the successful German onslaught on the Low Countries and France in the summer of 1940. The offensive was launched on May 10: Holland was overrun in five days; Belgium capitulated on May 28, and on June 22 the campaign was terminated by the conclusion of an armistice with France. Detail maps of various stages of the great battle appear in succeeding Chapters.

Relief map specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*







BY MINE AND TA K-TRAP HOLLAND IMPEDED THE INV DER TO THE LIMIT OF HI POWER

German troops reached the first line of defence along the Yssel and Maas early in the short-lived campaign. Among bridges on the latter river blown up by the defenders was the Wilhelmina Bridge at Maastricht, a finely proportioned modern structure opened in 1932. As seen above, the Nazis were thereby compelled to use rubber-boats in order to reach the western bank and continue the advance. Their motorized units were seriously hindered in many places by skilfully sited demolition charges under important highways; the right-hand photograph gives some idea of the effect of such land mines. Illustrated on the left is one of the devices used by the German advance-guards to advise the airmen cooperating with them of the capture of a village. It consists of a large swastika roughly delineated in white material on a conspicuous part of a roadway.

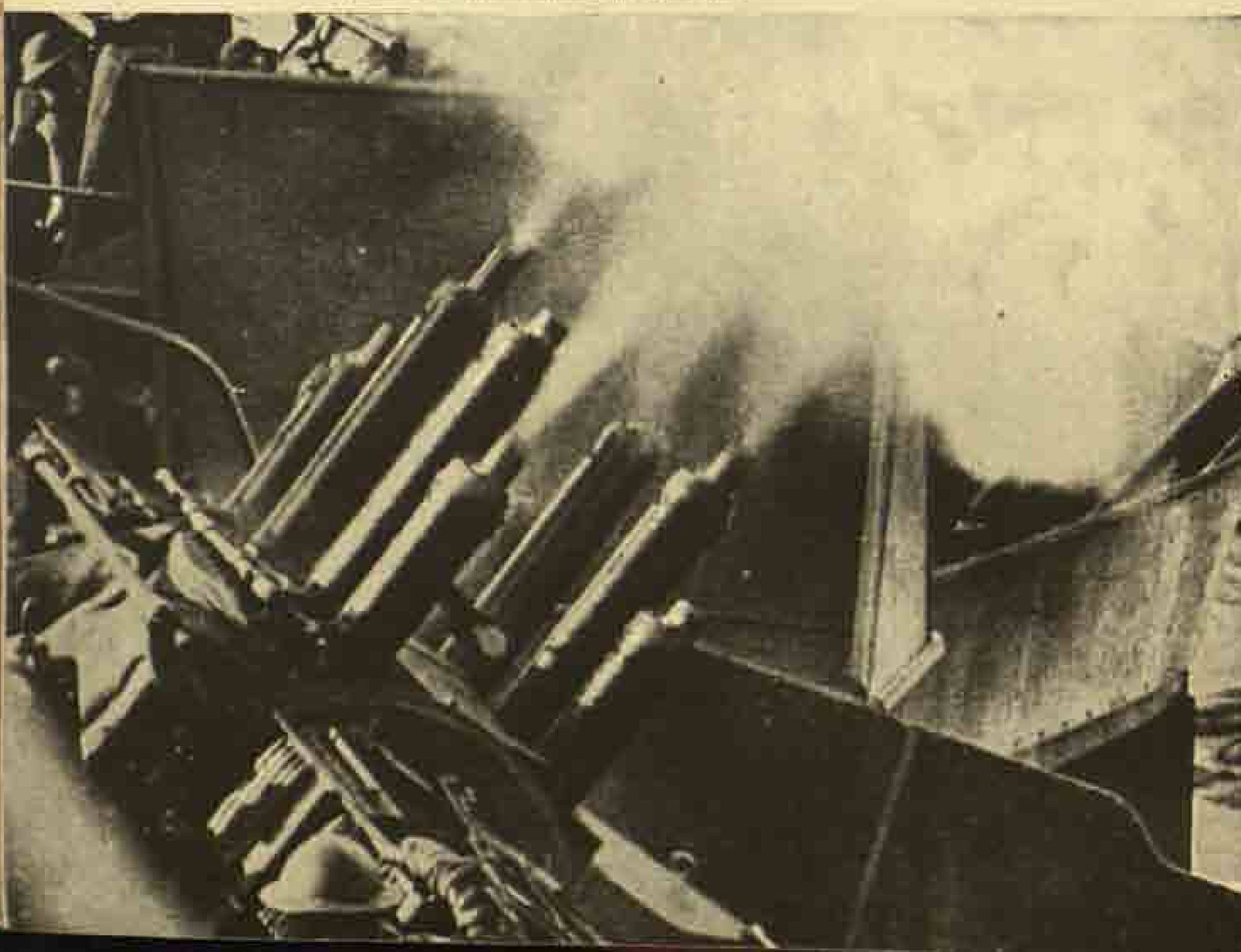
Photos, Keystone ; International Graphic Press



AIR ATTACK AND DEFENCE IN NORWEGIAN WATERS

The vivid photograph above shows great columns of water spurting up in front of the British aircraft carrier "Ark Royal" (so often "sunk" by the German High Command), as an enemy bomber unloads a salvo which again fails to find its mark. Below, a battery of pom-pom guns from a naval unit is putting up a barrage of fire which drives off the Nazi raiders, their mission unaccomplished.

Photos, British Movietone News Film; Planet News





BRIDGE THAT HELPED THE GERMANS CONQUER HOLLAND

The great Moerdyk bridge, here seen from the air, spans the chief estuary of the River Maas (known as the Hollandsch Diep) which separates North and South Holland. Strategically, the bridge is of major importance since it carries the main railway link between Dordrecht and the North and Antwerp. It was crossed by the German armoured columns on May 14, and its capture was one of the deciding factors in the Dutch decision to cease fighting.

Photo, E.N.A.

airports and the barracks, bridges, and locks, were being attacked by these walking arsenals. Numbers of these invaders were killed by the Dutch riflemen before they came to earth, and others were shot or overpowered before they had time to wreak their fancy of destruction. Many more, however, were only too successful, and so in the course of the day the whole of Holland became involved in a confused welter of fighting.



GALLANT DUTCH C.-in-C.

In the face of overwhelming odds General H. G. Winkelman, Commander-in-Chief of the Sea and Land Forces in the Netherlands, put up a brave and determined resistance to the Nazi attack. But the bloody bombing of Rotterdam largely compelled him to lay down his arms. He was later taken to Germany as prisoner of war.

Photo, Planet News

At frequent intervals the announcers at Hilversum broadcast warnings to the population of the approach of Nazi troop-carrying 'planes above this town or that. But the ingenuity of the parachutists' disguises carried them past the Dutch defences. The main defence lines in the Netherlands are shown in the relief map printed in page 1515. The airborne invasion upset at the outset of the campaign all normal strategical plans, for the enemy appeared inside the country and struck at the main centres of industry and organization from within. Though at first the parachutists were few in number they seized key positions such as airfields and made possible the landing of troop-carriers bringing reinforcements. Much confusion was inevitable among the Dutch—both soldiers and civilians.

Some of the fiercest fighting was in the neighbourhood of Rotterdam. Here in the early hours of May 10 large numbers of Nazi troops were landed from transports which had made their way down the coast during the night, and managed to establish themselves in the harbour area. Enemy seaplanes landed on the River Mass, in the centre of the town. Troop-carrying aircraft landed on the aerodrome of Waalhaven. Even in the streets of Rotterdam there was fierce fighting, and soon the whole of the Old Town was ablaze as well as much of the shipping in the harbour and the adjacent river reaches. In Rotterdam, as in only too many other places, the invaders were most powerfully and cunningly aided by Nazi sympathizers amongst the Dutch civilian population; indeed, in Holland as in Norway, the work of the Fifth Columnists was largely responsible for the eventual collapse of the national resistance.

Work of Fifth Columnists

Ere long the struggle had assumed a fantastic appearance. There was not one front but a thousand. Everywhere there was the noise of battle; every horizon was blackened with the smoke of burning homes. The Dutch soldiers and gendarmes put up a stern resistance after the first shock of surprise, but they were hampered on every hand by the enemy within the gates.

At the end of the day the Dutch General Headquarters issued a communiqué—the first for more than 100 years.

"German troops," it read, "crossed the Dutch frontier beginning at 3 a.m. today. Aerial attacks have been attempted on several aerodromes. The Army and the anti-aircraft artillery are ready. Flooding is being carried out according to plan. Up to the present, so far as is known, at least six German aeroplanes have been brought down."

The next day the battle was renewed—indeed, it never really ceased—and not only was the pressure of the air











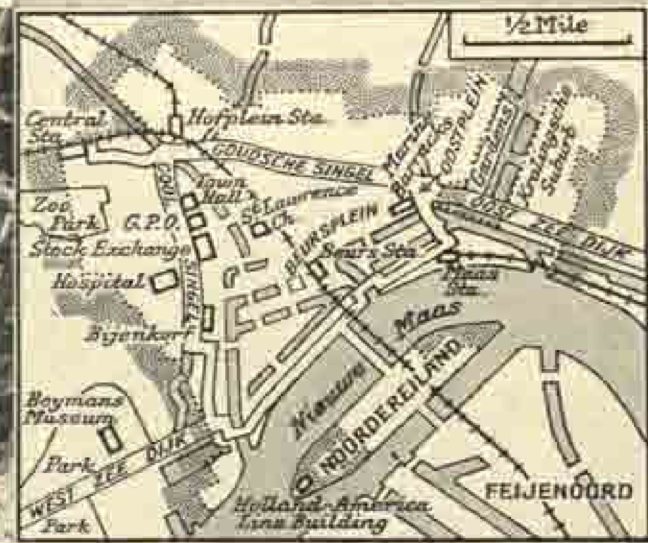
HOLLAND DEFIED THE AGGRESSOR

1. Troops of a Nazi Panzer division held up by a concrete road block, barbed wire and (behind the burning building on the right) a nest of anti-tank guns. 2. A demolished bridge over the River Yssel. 3. Trees dynamited to hamper the advance of motorized units. 4. Street barricades being removed after the capture of a town. 5. Fires caused by incendiary bombs at the Hook of Holland.















TWO SQUARE MILES LAID WASTE IN THIRTY MINUTES

How complete was the deliberate Nazi devastation of central Rotterdam may be judged from this photograph (centre left) taken later by R.A.F. reconnaissance aircraft. The razed area appears as an irregularly shaped, whitish patch standing out in strong contrast to the normal streets surrounding it. Above is a key plan to this pitiful scene of desolation. At the top of the page is the famous "Bijenkorf" department store in the Cooisingel—the city's main boulevard—before and after the bombing. Below (right) is a pre-invasion view down the Cooisingel itself, together (left) with the blackened shell of one of its many fine buildings. During street fighting in the city, rough fortifications were hurriedly thrown up (centre, right).

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Wide World; E.N.A.





PARACHUTISTS' PART IN THE RAPE OF HOLLAND

1. Vital supplies for parachute troops were dropped in containers such as this. 2. Parachutists await the order to descend. 3. One of the numerous 'fifth column' agents greets a group of his countrymen on their arrival. Note the latter's specialized equipment.

Photos, British Official ; Crown Copyright ; Planet News



attacks maintained, but on the ground the Germans compelled the main Dutch army to withdraw; in several places they forced the crossing of the Yssel and the Maas and overran the whole of the northern portions of the country. So sustained was the pressure, so swift the advance, that much of the demolition work which had been planned by Holland's military engineers was left undone, and so the water defences failed to justify the hopes which had been so confidently rested upon them.

Water Defences Fail

Swiftly the position worsened. All through that week-end of blood and fire Holland witnessed scenes which for their savage fury recalled the worst days of the sixteenth century when Alva's Spanish soldiery put the Netherlands to the sword. At Rotterdam fierce fighting went on as the invaders battled to extend their hold. Along the coast there were many landings, and Queen Wilhelmina and her daughter, Princess Juliana, were in imminent danger of capture. In the north the motorized columns reached the shores of the Zuyder Zee, though they were prevented from crossing by Dutch naval forces, supported by British and French motor torpedo boats. Still worse, the Germans, having pierced the main line of defence on the Yssel-Maas, were now pushing rapidly ahead across the Peel marshes and were threatening the Grebbe Line of defence which ran from the Zuyder Zee through Utrecht to the Belgian frontier. If this, too, gave way or were outflanked, then the invaders would shortly threaten "Fortress Holland"—that vital corner in which are grouped Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Leyden, and Utrecht. For a day or two the Grebbe Line did hold, but by the evening of May 13, it had been penetrated and the advance guard of the invaders had joined hands with their fellows at Rotterdam and in the vicinity of The Hague (see map in p. 1515).

By this time the gravity of the situation was such that Queen Wilhelmina could no longer remain in the country. From the opening of the battle she had been by word and deed the inspiration of her people, but now when the enemy were at the very gates of her palace and were obviously resolved on capturing her person so as to hold her as a hostage, she and her ministers took the "hard but necessary decision . . . to transfer abroad the seat of the Government for as long as is inevitable, and with the intention to re-establish ourselves at once in the Netherlands as soon as this would appear at all practicable." The Government, went on the message which she addressed to her people on the eve of her departure, were not prepared to capitulate, but it was left to the Commander-in-Chief of the Sea and Land Forces in the Netherlands, General Winkelman, to decide what measures could still be taken to maintain the war in continental Holland. The Queen was taken to England on May 13 in a British warship, and the Dutch Cabinet under Jonkheer de Geer followed her twenty-four hours later.

Wilhelmina Leaves for Britain

So dawned May 14—the day destined to be the last of Holland's five days' war. Early in the morning the Germans seized the Moerdyk bridge over the Hollandsch Diep, which separates the provinces of North Brabant and South Holland; with the bridge in their hands the Germans poured over the narrow stretch of water into Fortress Holland and moved swiftly northward to cut off Rotterdam and Amsterdam. With the land offensive was combined an intensification of air activity in which every centre of Dutch resistance was mercilessly bombed. Still the Hollanders

resisted, however, and so the Nazis determined to break their resistance once and for all by a display of terrorism of the most horrible kind and on an unexampled scale. In the course of the day two squadrons of German bombers flew backwards and forwards over Rotterdam and ploughed what were described as "veritable furrows of destruction" across the densely populated centre of the city. In half an hour nearly two square miles were converted into a vast heap of rubbish, beneath which were the bodies of some 30,000 citizens (see illus., pp. 1516 and 1520).

The murder of Rotterdam, combined with the military defeat suffered by their armies, convinced the Dutch that further resistance would be altogether useless, and that evening General Winkelman announced that Rotterdam and Utrecht had surrendered, and that, to save the civilian population, he felt justified in ordering the troops to lay down their arms.

At 11 o'clock on the same night the General explained in a broadcast that "we have had to lay down our arms because we must. We had decided to defend our Fatherland to the very limit. Today we have reached that limit." The Dutch soldiers had fought with courage beyond compare and had fallen in their thousands, but in face of the enemy's technical methods and their vast superiority in the air, they could fight no longer. Rotterdam, he went on, had suffered "the dire experience of total war," and Utrecht and other cities had been threatened in the same way. To have gone on would only have meant that still more innocent victims would have fallen. "It was impossible to go on," he concluded; and yet, "Long live the Queen! Long live the Fatherland!" The only troops exempted from the order to surrender were those in Zeeland, where, quite cut off from their comrades, they were fighting side by side with French troops and British naval units.



It was impossible to go on, General Winkelman had said: how impossible was learned a few hours later when the Dutch Foreign Minister, Dr. Van Kleffens, stated in Paris that in the course of the five days' fighting the Dutch Army had lost 100,000 men—approximately a quarter of its total strength; some regiments, notably the Grenadiers, had lost 80 per cent of their effectives. Holland's entire bombing force—true, it numbered only some fifty 'planes—had been wiped out quite early in the fighting. The troops in Zeeland continued to resist until May 17; on the other hand, most of the units of the Dutch Navy who were concentrated in the Scheldt managed to escape across the North Sea to English waters.

The war in Holland was at an end.



WILHELMINA THE BRAVE

Up to the last moment the Queen of the Netherlands stayed with her people, fortifying them in their hopeless struggle by her own courage and dignity in adversity. Only the imminent threat of deliberate murder or at least abduction compelled her to seek refuge in England, where she is here seen.

Photo, Wide World



BRITISH HELP FOR THE HARD-PRESSED DUTCH

Though prevented by lack of time from sending powerful military aid to Holland, the Allies gave invaluable help in safely evacuating many civilian refugees and Dutch troops. Some of the latter are seen (top left) after being rescued by the Royal Navy. Demolition parties (seen above, unloading gear) were landed at Ymuiden and the Hook of Holland.

Photos, Keystone; Wide World



THE OVERRUNNING OF BELGIUM

By a combination of carefully laid plans, overwhelming numerical strength, and treachery, the Nazis crossed the Meuse rapidly and outflanked the Albert Canal defences. Above, German tanks and artillery making a detour when faced by a destroyed road. Below, storm-troops about to cross the Meuse on rapidly constructed pontoons.

Photos, E.N.A.; Associated Press



BATTLE OF THE WEST: (2) THE BREAK-THROUGH ON THE MEUSE

Bombing of Brussels—Leopold Takes Command of the Belgian Army—Germans Cross the Maas—Vital Bridges Left Open—Appeal to Britain and France—B.E.F. Enters Belgium—Liége Holds Out—Capture of the Meuse Bridgeheads—Inverting the 'Schlieffen Plan'—The Germans Break Through

(An ampler account, based on later information, is given in Chapters 145-146. See also Chapters 147-148, on Lord Gort's Despatches)

The sound of anti-aircraft guns in action against Nazi warplanes, which had made a sudden appearance above Brussels on May 10, was the first indication given to the people of Belgium that for the second time within 26 years the Germans had broken their most solemn promises to respect the neutrality of their country. By 8.30 a.m., when Hitler's Ambassador in Brussels, Herr von Buelow-Schwante, called on M. Spaak, the Foreign Minister, hundreds of German 'planes had already bombed Brussels, Antwerp, and other Belgian cities, and fierce fighting was proceeding on the frontier, where the Belgian troops, having blown up as many as possible of the roads and bridges which they had mined in advance in the "zone of destruction," were now putting up a stern resistance against the invader.

In their memorandum the German Government asserted that they had clear proof that a Franco-British attack on Germany through the Low Countries was in preparation, and that the Government of Belgium, like that of Holland, was privy to it and so cooperating. But the tissue of excuses was brushed aside by M. Spaak. When the Ambassador, reading his "incredible note," declared that Belgium ought to "stop a useless resistance," M. Spaak interrupted with the remark that he might suspend the reading, and then proceeded to denounce in the most biting phrases Germany's latest act of unwarranted aggression. The Cabinet met shortly after midnight, when it was known that the German divisions which for so many weeks and months had been concentrated just the other side of the frontier were actually on the march: their destination could be guessed. Following the news of Holland's invasion and of the crossing of their own frontier, the Belgian Government ordered general mobilization.

Germany Invades Belgium

No time was lost, too, in appealing to Britain and France for aid. King Leopold, for his part, proceeded forthwith to take charge of the military operations. On the eve of his departure the King addressed a message to his people. "For the second time in a quarter of a century," he said, "Belgium, honest and neutral in her conduct, has been attacked by the German Reich, which treats with contempt the most solemn pledges . . . I shall remain faithful to the oath I took under the constitution to maintain the independence and integrity of my country as my father did in 1914. Belgium is innocent, and with the help of God we shall triumph."



On the same day Hitler also addressed his people. "For 300 years," he fulminated, "it has been the aim of Britain and France to prevent any consolidation in Europe, and especially to weaken Germany. The German people have no hatred against the British and French people, but we are today faced with a question of life or destruction." After repeating the lie about the Allies' alleged plans to attack the Ruhr through Belgium and Holland, the Fuehrer concluded: "Soldiers of the Western Front, your hour has come. The fight which begins today will determine Germany's future for the next thousand years."

Finally, we may listen to the voice of France's spokesman, General Gamelin, the Allied Generalissimo. "The attack that we had foreseen since October was launched this morning. Germany is engaged in a fight with us to the death. The Order of the Day for France and all her Allies is the words: courage, energy, confidence."

For France, too, was attacked—France, who since September 3 had been at war with Germany, but only now experienced the full weight of the enemy's onslaught. During the early hours of May 10 several French civilians were killed in their beds when bombers raided a number of French towns, including Nancy,



UNHAPPY BELGIUM SUFFERS AGAIN

On May 10, 1940, for the second time in 26 years, Germany violated the neutrality of Belgium. Above, a special edition of 'La Nation Belge' tells Belgians that 'The German Has Come Back.' The upper photograph is of M. Spaak, the Belgian Foreign Minister, who in scathing terms denounced this new instance of German aggression.

Photos, Sport & General; Keystone





DEVASTATION FROM THE AIR

Here are two phases of the terrific aerial bombardment which was a feature of the opening of the Blitzkrieg in the West. Above, Brussels under a hail of German bombs; right, French soldiers clearing wreckage after the aerial bombardment of Nancy by the Germans on May 10, 1940.

Photos, Keystone

Lyons, Lille, Colmar, Béthune, Lens, Hazebrouck, Calais, Abbeville, and Laon. There was some fighting on the frontier of Luxemburg, for the little principality made the third of Hitler's new victims on this morning. The Belgian defence plans are outlined in page 1526, and the dispositions of the armies are indicated on the map in page 1530.

In the first two days of the offensive the critical point on the far-flung battle line was the "Maastricht appendix," where Holland, Belgium, and Germany meet. The little arm of Dutch territory was overrun in a few hours, and the Germans, equipped with a tremendous mechanized force, threatened the crossings of the Meuse and the parallel waterway of the Albert Canal (*see* map in page 1529) which formed the main line of Belgian defence in the north. The bridges in Maastricht were destroyed by Dutch sappers, but the enemy crossed by a pontoon bridge built by his engineers. On May 11 the Germans took the key fortress of Eben Eymael (in the Liége group) and secured a crossing of the Albert Canal there (*see* photographs in page 1526).

The 'Maastricht Appendix'

Opposite Maastricht, and about two miles to the west of the town, there were three bridges over the canal. Here we may continue the story in the words of M. Pierlot, the Belgian Prime Minister, as he told it in a broadcast speech on the evening of Sunday, May 12.

"The officer charged with the destruction of the two bridges next to Maastricht," said the Premier, "was killed by one of the early bombs. This caused a delay in carrying out the order, which was used by the enemy to occupy the two bridges and to cross them with motorized units. Later on, however, one of our officers penetrated into the German lines, reached the mine chambers, and blew himself up with the bridge, thus sacrificing his life in the accomplishment of his duty."

One bridge still remained open, despite this gallant deed, and across it the Germans poured an enormous mass of tanks supported by hordes of aircraft, which forced the Belgians, despite their fierce resistance, to withdraw as far as the outskirts of Tongres. In the afternoon they launched a counter-attack, but soon afterwards they were compelled to retire to new positions.

On May 12 a squadron of Blenheims of the R.A.F. bombed the Albert Canal bridges, and later that day six Battles made another attack and put the bridges out of action. Flying-Officer Garland and Sergeant Gray, of the leading Battle, were posthumously awarded the V.C. for this operation.

Tremendous attacks were developed on the Liége forts by heavy artillery, by bombing 'planes, and by waves of infantry who came on in such numbers that, said M. Pierlot, "the glacis of these forts is covered with German corpses"; but the main battle moved on to the north and east.

From the Belgian Premier's survey of the position—"the military situation is serious," he said, "but will be re-established"—it was clear that already the battle had taken an unexpected turn, and one for the worse.

The Albert Canal had been crossed, whereby the Germans had not only driven a wedge between Belgium and Holland, where the Dutch troops were putting up a manful resistance, but threatened to outflank the whole of the Belgian defences in the east and make a direct drive on Brussels and Antwerp. There was one bright feature in an

otherwise gloomy, even grim, outlook, and that was the speed with which the appeal for help made to the Allies was answered.

For years past, ever since King Leopold's denunciation of the Locarno guarantees in 1937, the Belgians had held Britain and France at arm's length and had refused even to consider so obvious a measure of precaution as combined staff talks. Fortunately, however, the Allies had laid plans for such an eventuality as had now come about, and since the arrival of the British Expeditionary Force in France in the autumn of 1939 large forces of British troops, supported by French divisions, had occupied positions on the French side of the Belgian frontier, where they had spent the winter in strengthening the extension of the Maginot Line that reached the coast near Dunkirk.





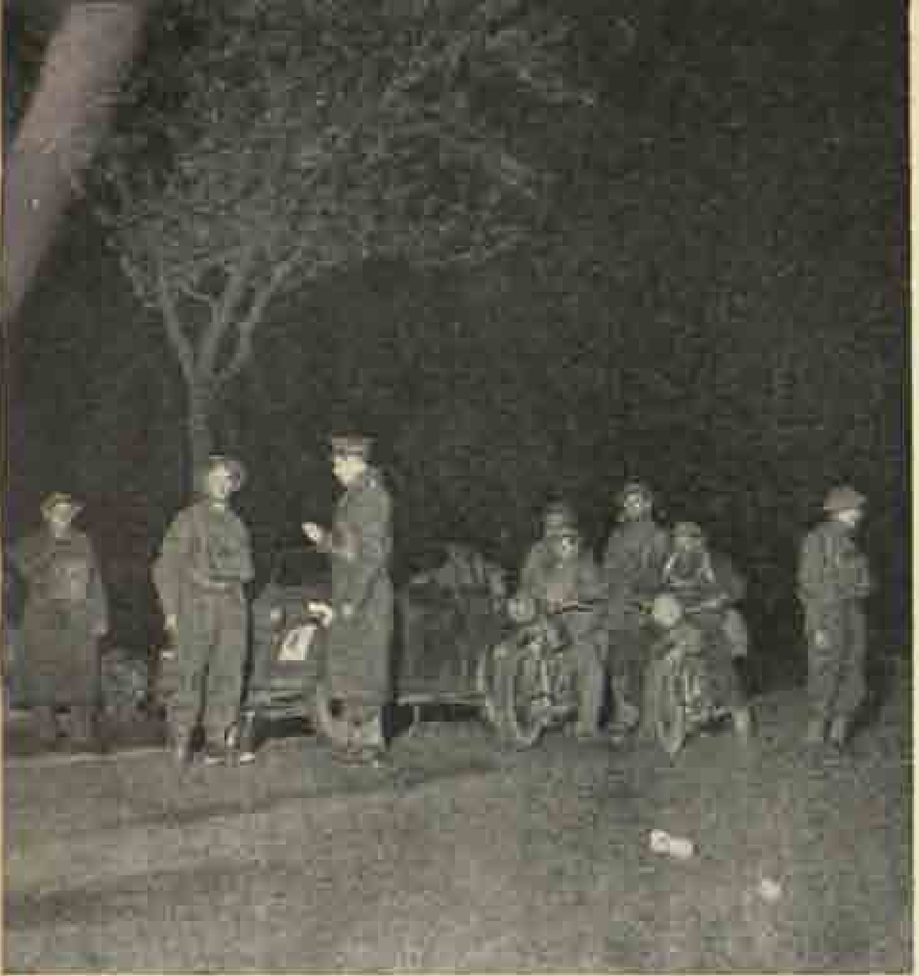
WAR COMES TO LUXEMBURG

The pathetic exodus of refugees from the invaded countries began on May 10, 1940, when Nazi hordes swept over the Low Countries. Above, peasants of Luxemburg are seen fleeing into France driving their cows before them. Left, a Nazi patrol walking down the deserted streets of the town of Luxemburg. Below, a French tank arriving in a village of the Duchy.

Photos, Associated Press; Service Géographique de l'Armée



The appeal was handed to the British and French Ambassadors in the early hours of May 10, and between six and seven o'clock in the morning a highly mechanized British Army had reached the Belgian frontier. "Leading elements of the B.E.F. in cooperation with the French Army entered Belgium today," read a communiqué issued by British G.H.Q. on May 10. They were accorded a great welcome by the Belgian populace. As soon as the frontier barriers had been raised the British troops poured into Belgium—tanks, armoured cars, men on motor-cycles and in lorries, moved along the cobbled roads in one continuous stream. The inhabitants greeted them with immense enthusiasm; the Belgian girls plucked lilac from the roadside bushes and threw it to the soldiers, and at every stop mugs of beer were promptly forthcoming. "The British are here," was the phrase that passed from mouth to mouth, and the news brought fresh hope and encouragement to a little country already reeling beneath the



B.E.F. ADVANCE GUARDS IN BELGIUM

As soon as Belgium called for assistance, British troops moved forward to her defence. Some of the advance guards are seen in the photograph above crossing the Belgian frontier at night. Below, a Belgian girl offers a bouquet to two smiling British soldiers of a motor-cycle detachment.

Photos, Section Cinéma de l'Armée ; British Official : Crown Copyright



hammer strokes of a lightning onslaught carried out by the greatest military power in the world. In the course of centuries many British armies have marched into Belgium, sometimes as enemies, more often as friends and allies, but never was a British army received with such raptures of enthusiasm as on this occasion, or given so heartfelt a welcome.

While Belgium was being invaded by friends from the west, the enemy proceeded with his invasion on the east. Having crossed the Meuse and virtually outflanked the Albert Canal defences, the German mechanized forces continued their progress, their way made clear by attacks delivered by an enormous horde of bombing 'planes. Scores of German tanks were knocked out, hundreds of 'planes were brought down, but their numbers were replenished from an apparently inexhaustible reservoir.

Canal Line Outflanked

In spite of fierce counter-attacks carried out with great bravery, the Germans moved rapidly ahead, and soon their advanced elements were stated to be at Waremme, some 16 miles west of Liége on the main railway to Louvain and Brussels. This was on Sunday, May 12, and that same night details were given of the capture (on the 11th) of Eben Emael, the outlying fort of Liége, which had been completed only of recent years and was held to be one of the strongest in Europe. It had been forced to capitulate when its great concrete walls had been battered by shellfire and bombed into ruin, and parachutists had slain the garrison by dropping hand-grenades down the casemate openings and by laying mines which blew them sky-high. (*See* the remarkable photographs printed in pages 1526–1527.)

Meanwhile, the British and French moving into Belgium continued their progress, hardly interrupted by attacks from the German air arm; indeed, this immunity was deemed suspicious at the time, and later the suspicions were confirmed when it was realized that it suited Germany's plans that the B.E.F. should be so fully involved in Belgium when the attack on the flank developed.

B.E.F. in the Belgian Trap

(The reader should refer to Chapter 148 dealing with Lord Gort's Despatches covering these operations.)

Early in the morning of May 13 British G.H.Q. announced that "minor encounters between British cavalry"—by cavalry, tanks were meant—"and the enemy have ended to our advantage." Now there developed a gigantic struggle between largely mechanized forces as the Germans, having forced

the crossing of the Albert Canal near Hasselt, poured westwards in the direction of Brussels, while a subsidiary force was left to contain the forts at Liége which were still maintaining the struggle. Before the mass of armour hurled against them, the Belgian troops fell back from the salient in which they had been caught between the Meuse and the Albert Canal, and endeavoured to form a fresh defence line in front of Antwerp and Louvain.

But this line, too, was threatened when the Germans developed a general offensive against the Franco-Belgian defences on the Meuse and in the Ardennes. This region, hilly and heavily wooded, had been dotted with concrete machine-gun posts, but was only lightly held, as it had been thought that the nature of the country would prove a considerable obstacle to the advancing mechanized forces. That hope, like so many others, was speedily dissipated when the German columns penetrated the Ardennes in force and, approaching by way of Luxembourg, delivered a fierce attack against the French line in the Longwy area.

Indeed, south of Liége—upon whose citadel the swastika flag was now flying, if German report spoke true, though the eastern forts still held out—the enemy advance was rapid as in the north. By May 14 the Nazis had reached the banks of the Meuse west of Liége, and their advance guards were within sight of the great fortress of Namur. From Namur to Sedan they were within striking distance of the Meuse bridgeheads. The French communiqué issued that night spoke of German attempts to cross the river south of Namur at several points. "We have launched counter-attacks and the fighting continues, more especially in the region of Sedan, where the enemy is making a momentous effort with furious obstinacy and at the expense of heavy casualties." The communiqué issued earlier in the day had announced that Sedan had been evacuated and that the battle had now extended from the Meuse at Sedan to the Moselle north of Metz.

Nazis Reach Meuse

Although the main German armoured forces were now being flung against the Allied line along the Meuse south of Namur, there was no relaxation of the pressure in the north. The Germans lost no time in developing to the full the advantage they had gained when they broke through on the Albert Canal. The Belgian Army, heavily outnumbered from the beginning and now wasted by days of furious battle, was rallied on the new defence line in front of Antwerp and





THE B.E.F. ENTERS BELGIUM

In this page British troops are seen as they moved into Belgium in the first week of May to help the hard-pressed Belgian army. Top, R.E.'s taking up a frontier post to enable troops and supplies to move forward freely. Centre, a motor-cycle detachment passing the Belgian frontier. Below, cheering Belgians greet a British gun-team.



Louvain, but it was already showing signs of severe shock and imminent disorganization. Moreover, its withdrawal to its new positions was severely hampered by the great flood of refugees who crowded the roads as they fled in terror from the towns and villages, from the homes and farmsteads, which were menaced by the German advance or had already been destroyed by their bombing 'planes. The disorder was increased by the operations of Nazi parachutists, who were employed as they had been employed only too successfully in Holland a day or two before, to work havoc and destruction behind the actual fighting line.

Joined with the Belgians in their new





FRANCE PROMISES SUCCOUR

Belgians reading a proclamation informing them that the French army was on its way to aid them. It begins, as shown in the close-up below, "Belgians, the French Army is coming to your aid to protect you against an enemy which has no respect for the Rights of Peoples. . . ." Unhappily, the lack of previous staff talks, due to Belgium's belief in neutrality, minimized the effect of Allied aid.

Photos, Associated Press



FRANCE ADVANCES, OVER-CONFIDENT

A column of French troops is here seen passing along a Belgian road near the frontier. But they proved ill-equipped to meet the terrific onslaught of the massed German armoured divisions. Though not lacking in courage, they had not visualized the true character of the Blitzkrieg.

Photo, Topical

positions were the divisions of the B.E.F., to whom was entrusted in part the defence of Louvain. On that same May 14—the day on which to the south the battle on the Meuse was developing in all its furious intensity, while to the north Holland was bombed and bludgeoned into capitulation—Lord Gort issued an Order of the Day: "We are now on the eve of one of the great moments in the history of our empire," he declared. "The struggle will be hard and long, but we can be confident of final victory."

In the late afternoon of May 13 a great hurricane of tanks descended on the French line on the Meuse where the 9th and 2nd Armies held adjoining sectors between Namur and Sedan, and so terrific was the onslaught that it was clear that this was the really determined bid for complete victory. The object was, as Hitler revealed weeks later in his speech to the Reichstag on July 19, the

DRAMATIC COLLAPSE OF EBEN EYMAEL AND MAUBEUGE

The great German drive westward completely shattered the legend of the unpregnable land fortress. Eben Eymael, regarded as the most powerful and modern of Liége's defences, was reduced in a few hours by aerial bombardment and mines laid by parachutists. Maubeuge, the famed French stronghold, was similarly assaulted and fell in three days. These German photographs show: 1. The white flag flying over Fort Des Sarts, Maubeuge; 2. Direct artillery hits on an 11-inch cupola at Maubeuge; 3. Storm troops moving to the final attack at Maubeuge; 4. German soldiery in the wrecked confines of Eben Eymael.

Photos from "Die Wehrmacht," Berlin













MAY, 1940—BELGIUM ONCE MORE RAVAGED BY HUNS

Here are more scenes from the invasion of Belgium. Above, a German 4-inch howitzer is seen in action on a country road. Circle, German troops entering a shattered Belgian farm, where barbed wire entanglements had been hurriedly erected. Below, a German motor-cycle detachment passing through a devastated village.

Photos, Keystone; Central Press



complete destruction of the Anglo-French armies. "I succeeded," he said, "in deceiving the enemy staffs by inverting the Schlieffen plan"—that plan which, it may be recalled, was essentially a thrust through the northern districts of Belgium past Antwerp and Ghent to France's Channel ports. "In contradiction to the Schlieffen plan of 1914 I arranged for operations to bear mainly on the left wing of the front, though ostensibly retaining the principles of the former plan. It was made easier by the enemy himself, who had concentrated all his motorized troops on the Belgian frontier. I attacked the right flank and succeeded. The operations were not undertaken in the first place with the object of taking Paris, but to break through up to the Seine, and on the left side up to the Swiss frontier. Paris fell. The resistance on the Aisne was broken. The Maginot Line was overrun. . . ."

But this is to anticipate. On May 13–15 the French resisted as best they might, but, faced at certain points with an overwhelming mass of armoured units, they were obliged to give way. Sedan was captured about 5 p.m. on the 13th; the German tank columns broke through the French lines, and then, spreading out fanwise in all directions, began what soon developed into a general mêlée, which lasted for days. As a result of what M. Reynaud, the French Premier, described a few days later in the French Senate as "incredible mistakes," the bridges over the Meuse were not destroyed. Over the bridges poured in an endless stream the German mechanized columns under the command of General Guderian—"preceded by . . . aeroplanes which came to attack divisions which were scattered, ill-cadred and badly trained for such attacks." (A later account stated that the Germans crossed the Meuse N. of Dinant in rubber boats and established two bridgeheads for their Panzer columns.) The army opposed to Guderian—General Corap's 9th Army—was not only defeated but shattered; it was said afterwards that the General had been given an impossible task in the holding of a long sector of the front with troops which had already been combed of reserves dispatched north to help the Belgians. Corap was dismissed on the 15th, and to his successor, General Giraud, was given the task of rallying the broken French front. Giraud fell into German hands on May 16.

Break-through at Sedan

As the situation deteriorated, forces of British and French bombers launched a combined attack on the crossings of the Meuse and the main lines of the advancing reinforcements—over 150 Allied aircraft were engaged in this operation—and they succeeded in destroying four bridges, in breaking up a number of tank and troop concentrations, and blocking a number of roads. For a short time the German advance in the Sedan sector was halted, but soon reinforcements were brought up and the hurricane blew again in full force.



ONE BRIDGE THAT WAS DESTROYED

This aerial photograph of the Albert Canal shows a new bridge at Locht which was demolished by the Allies to impede the German advance. The Nazis threw over a small pontoon, but the passage of heavy artillery and tanks was successfully hindered.

Photo, British Official; Crown Copyright

Guderian's tactics marked a complete change in the character of the war. The French High Command had anticipated a static war, in which they would be charged with defending their native soil from behind the vast bastion of steel and concrete which had been constructed from Basle to Montmédy, from the frontier of Switzerland to that of Belgium. Beyond Montmédy to the English Channel the defence line was little more than a series of disconnected concrete pill boxes; but then the French had considered that either Belgian neutrality would not be violated, in which case they would have nothing more to do than to remain on the defensive on the Maginot Line, or, if Belgium were invaded, then the Germans would be held on the line of the Meuse between Namur and Sedan. The extension of the Maginot Line along the Belgian frontier would, they imagined, only come into play if the Belgians gave passage to the Germans without fighting.

The break-through on the Meuse confounded their predictions, frustrated their hopes. The war was again a war of movement as it had been in 1914, but now the speed with which it moved was far greater, and so, too, was the devastating power of the enemy's onslaught. The generals did their best to meet the new situation, but it was difficult to think out fresh plans; more difficult still to put them into operation, when the firm front which had been so carefully built up suddenly became fluid, and far behind the zone where French and Germans were engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle the mechanized columns of the enemy reached out like the tentacles of some vast armoured octopus.





SEDAN—TOWN OF ILL OMEN

At Sedan, scene of the colossal French defeat in 1870, the Germans broke through the French defences on May 13–14, 1940. Above, the old fortress of Sedan, and in foreground houses blown up by the retiring French forces. Right, Nazi columns, seen converging on Sedan, have to make a detour outside the village of Floing owing to accurate Allied bombing of the forked crossroads.

Photos, Associated Press; British Official: Crown Copyright



HE ATTEMPTED AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK

Above, General Giraud is seen on arrival at a German airport. He was captured by the Nazis while vainly trying to reorganize the shattered army of General Corap. During the war of 1914–18 General Giraud was captured by the Germans, but managed then to escape.

Photo, B.N.A.

Perhaps the French were right when they claimed that the Maginot Line could never be taken by frontal assault. But the assertion remained unproved, for why should the Germans attack it from the front when it could be outflanked with such ease! So the guns of the Maginot Line continued to point and sometimes to blaze across the Rhine, while the tide of battle left them far behind as it swept across the wooded hills of the Ardennes and the great plain of north-eastern France.

Historic Documents. CXI–CXVI

HOLLAND HELPLESS AGAINST FORCE MAJEURE

Hitler's five-day campaign in Holland was destined to succeed, for the Dutch Army, though gallant in spirit, was inadequate in numbers and equipment to withstand the invading Nazi hordes. Below we reprint two royal protests against the outrage, and apologias of the Queen of the Netherlands and her Commander-in-Chief when it was realized that Holland must lay down her arms or perish altogether.

QUEEN WILHELMINA IN A PROCLAMATION TO THE DUTCH PEOPLE, MAY 10, 1940:

After our country, with scrupulous conscientiousness, had observed strict neutrality during all these months, and while Holland had no other plan than to maintain this attitude, Germany last night made a sudden attack on our territory without warning. This was done notwithstanding the solemn promise that the neutrality of our country would be respected as long as we ourselves maintained that neutrality.

I herewith make a flaming protest against this unprecedented violation of good faith and violation of all that is decent between cultured States. I and my Government will also do our duty now. Do your duty everywhere and in all circumstances. Everyone to the post to which he is appointed, with the utmost vigilance and with that inner calmness and strong-heartedness which a clear conscience gives.

KING GEORGE IN A MESSAGE TO THE QUEEN OF THE NETHERLANDS, MAY 10, 1940:

I am profoundly shocked by the news of the brutal and wholly unwarranted German invasion of your Majesty's country. Not only is this action a defiance of international law and of solemn undertakings, but without any pretence of warning the neutrality so strictly observed by the Netherlands since the outbreak of war has been grossly outraged. I wish to express to your Majesty my disgust at this crime and my admiration for the brave resistance which is being made by the people of the Netherlands under your Majesty's leadership. In response to the appeal which my Government has received from your Majesty's Government, the Allies are hastening to the support of your Majesty's forces. I am confident that our cause will prevail, and that the Netherlands, true to their own history, will still remain the home of free men. In this hour of trial and anxiety I wish to convey to your Majesty and to all your people an expression of the sympathy and admiration for your country which is felt by my peoples throughout the world.

GENERAL WINKELMAN, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DUTCH FORCES, IN A PROCLAMATION BROADCAST ON MAY 14, 1940:

Germany has this afternoon bombed Rotterdam. Utrecht was also threatened with destruction. To save the civil population and to prevent further sacrifice of life, I feel justified in ordering the troops concerned to lay down their arms. They are told to exercise control until the arrival of the German regular armies. For this purpose they are to keep their arms. The fight in Zeeland is continuing. I appeal to the population to maintain a serious and dignified attitude at the coming occupation, so as to compel the respect of the Germans. By a vast superiority of the most modern arms the enemy has been able to break our resistance. We have nothing with which to reproach ourselves. We appeal to the Dutch people to remain calm. Ultimately the Netherlands will rise again as a free nation. Long live our Queen!

GENERAL WINKELMAN IN A STATEMENT BROADCAST AT 11 P.M. ON MAY 14, 1940:

We have laid down our arms because we must. We had decided to defend our Fatherland to the very limit. Today we have reached that limit.

Our soldiers have fought with the courage which will always be beyond compare. In face of the technical methods of the enemy this was not enough. In thousands they have fallen in defence of the liberty of the Netherlands. Our air forces were so reduced that they could no longer support the army. We could not fight against the German superiority in the air. And among the civilian population also numerous victims have fallen in the air raids. Rotterdam has undergone the sad experience of total war. Utrecht and other cities were threatened the same way. . . . These facts have led me to this very serious decision. We have given up fighting.

We must put our confidence in the indestructible powers which always distinguish our people. Our new lot must be borne with courage and determination. We must have confidence in the future. We must show this in our behaviour. We must set ourselves to reconstruct our damaged country. Long live her Majesty the Queen! Long live the Fatherland!

QUEEN WILHELMINA IN A PROCLAMATION TO THE DUTCH PEOPLE, MAY 14, 1940:

Once it had become certain that we and our Ministers could not continue freely to exercise the supreme authority in the Netherlands, the hard but necessary decision had to be taken to transfer abroad the seat of the Government for as long as is unavoidable and with the intention to re-establish ourselves at once in the Netherlands as soon as this would appear at all practicable.

The Government are now in England. They are not prepared, as a Government, to capitulate. Consequently, the territory of the Netherlands remaining in our hands, in Europe as well as in the East and West Indies, continues to be a sovereign State able to assert its place as a full member of the community of States, and in particular in the joint deliberations of the Allies.

The military authorities, and in the last resort the Commander-in-Chief of the Sea and Land Forces, now have to decide what measures it is necessary to take from the military point of view. In those parts of the country where the usurper has now established domination, the local civil authorities should continue to do all they can in the interest of the population, and in the first place help in the maintenance of order.

Our heart goes out towards our compatriots, who in our beloved country will have to pass through hard times. In due course, however, with God's help, the Netherlands will regain their European territory. Remember calamities which occurred in past centuries, and the repeated resurrection of our country. That will take place again. Do not despair. Let all do what it is possible for them to do in the interest of the country. Long live the Netherlands!

QUEEN WILHELMINA IN A BROADCAST TO THE PEOPLES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE, MAY 15, 1940:

I and my people have always hoped that it would be possible to limit the extent of the European conflict, and that a reasonable basis for a lasting peace would be established in the near future. Today it appears that all our fervent prayers in favour of common understanding between nations have proved futile. Today we have to admit that no happiness can be expected in this world if those who are solely responsible for the present situation are not definitely checked in their course of unscrupulous destruction and utter disregard of law and the most elementary principles of morality.

After a heroic struggle my nation, that has attempted everything to maintain peace, is being overpowered by sheer superiority of force. But morally we can never be conquered. Our spirit will remain unbroken because our conscience is clear. Notwithstanding the great distress that my people are suffering at the present moment, and the oppression under which they will live until the country is free again, I am convinced that they will never give up their faith in the cause of freedom and justice. I pray God that our allied cause be blessed, and that the dawn of the day when freedom will be restored to the Netherlands and to all other victims of German aggression be near.

Historic Documents. CXVII–CXXI

TRAGEDY OF THE BELGIAN SURRENDER

It has been suggested that, when all the facts are known and historical perspective achieved, King Leopold's order to his Army to cease fire may prove less an act of perfidy than it appears today. Among our selection from important statements and proclamations on the Belgian invasion we include one by the King himself which makes even more incomprehensible his subsequent betrayal of the Allies.

BARON DE CARTIER DE MARCHIENNE, BELGIAN AMBASSADOR IN LONDON, IN A BROADCAST FROM THE B.B.C., MAY 10, 1940:

NEARLY 26 years ago the Belgian nation, brutally attacked in spite of every promise by a wanton foe, stood up as one man under the leadership of their great King Albert to defend their freedom, their independence and their honour, fully conscious of the fact that they risked total annihilation. After four years of bitter struggle, during which the most cruel hardships were inflicted on a defenceless civil population, Belgium finally, side by side with her glorious Allies, emerged victorious from the fight of justice against evil, and applied herself to the task of rebuilding her battered country.

Today's aggression is, if possible, even more odious. Fundamentally, the crime perpetrated against a peaceful people is the same. This time there is not even the pretence of an ultimatum. We first knew of the attack when bombs began falling early this morning. As for the miserable excuses invented by the leaders of the Third Reich for breaking the most solemn promises made in 1937 and renewed in September last, they will deceive nobody, and they can join the scrapheap of their lies and broken pledges.

Today, thanks to the wise leadership and foresight of King Leopold III, the keystone of whose policy has been to strengthen to the utmost the defences of the country, we face the aggressor with forces ten times as great, and we are fully confident that, with the help of our old allies, we shall see the struggle through to victory. We know full well that our country may once more be destroyed. No people know better than the Belgians the horrors that modern warfare brings to such a small territory and thickly populated country. Thoroughly realizing the perils they are facing, my compatriots are all the more determined to fight with all the strength at their command. The Belgians of 1940, united as their fathers were in 1914, will follow the beloved son of our great King Albert and prove worthy of their elders. God save our country! Long live King Leopold!

KING LEOPOLD OF THE BELGIANS IN A PROCLAMATION TO HIS PEOPLE, MAY 11, 1940:

FOR the second time in a quarter of a century Belgium, loyal and neutral, has been attacked by the German Empire, in spite of most solemn engagements. But the Belgium of 1940 will resist the same as that of 1914. Up to the last moment we had faithfully discharged our duty of neutrality. To the valiant Belgian army and to our courageous soldiers I send my fraternal greetings. They are fighting side by side to stop the enemy in progress right across our frontiers, and to limit the amount of national territory violated by the invader.

Thanks to the effort agreed to by the entire nation, our country is today infinitely stronger than in 1914. France and Great Britain have given us their support, and their first troops are already on their way to meet ours. The struggle will be hard, but no one can doubt its ultimate outcome.

Like my father in 1914, I have placed myself at the head of my troops with the same faith and confidence. The Belgian cause is pure and, with the help of God, will triumph.

M. REYNAUD, FRENCH PREMIER, BROADCASTING AT 8.30 A.M. ON MAY 28, 1940:

I HAVE to inform the French people of a grave event. This event occurred during the night. France can no longer count on the help of the Belgian Army. The French Army and the British Army are now fighting alone against the enemy in the north.

You know what the situation was following the break in our front on May 14. The German Army thrust itself between our Armies, which found themselves cut into two groups—one in the north, the other in the south. In the south are French divisions who hold a new front which follows the Somme and the Aisne and then joins up with the intact Maginot Line. In the north is a group of three Allied armies, the Belgian Army, the British Expeditionary Force and some French divisions, among which many of us have a dear one. This group of three armies, under the command of General Blanchard, was supplied via Dunkirk. The French and British Armies defended this port in the south and in the west, and the Belgian Army in the north. It is this Belgian Army which, at the height of the battle, has, unconditionally and without warning its British and French comrades-in-arms, suddenly capitulated on the orders of its King and opened the road to Dunkirk to the German divisions.

Eighteen days ago this same King addressed to us an appeal for help. To that appeal we responded, following a plan conceived by the Allied General Staffs last December. Then, in the midst of battle, King Leopold of the Belgians, who until May 10 always affected to attach as much worth to Germany's word as to that of the Allies, King Leopold III, without warning General Blanchard, without one thought, without one word for the British and French soldiers who came to the help of his country on his anguished appeal—King Leopold III of the Belgians laid down his arms. It is a fact without precedent in history.

M. PIERLOT, BELGIAN PRIME MINISTER, BROADCASTING FROM PARIS, MAY 28, 1940:

OVERRULING the formal and unanimous advice of the Government, the King has opened separate negotiations and has treated with the enemy. Belgium will be dumbfounded, but the guilt of one man cannot be imputed to the whole nation. Our Army has not deserved the fate which has befallen it.

The act which we deplore is without any legal validity. It does not bind the country. According to the terms of the Belgian Constitution, which the King swore to uphold, all the powers come from the people. They are exercised as laid down by the Constitution. No act of the King can be valid unless it bears the counter-signature of a Minister. The King, breaking the bond which bound him to his people, placed himself under the power of the invader. Henceforth he is no longer in a position to govern, since obviously the functions of the head of the State cannot be carried out under foreign control. . . . The Government . . . . is resolved to continue the struggle for the liberation of the country . . . .

MR. CHURCHILL, PRIME MINISTER, IN A STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 28, 1940:

THE House will be aware that the King of the Belgians yesterday sent a plenipotentiary to the German Command asking for a suspension of arms on the Belgian front. The British and French Governments instructed their generals immediately to dissociate themselves from these proceedings and to persevere in the operations on which they were now engaged. However, the German Command has agreed to the Belgian proposals, and the Belgian armies ceased to resist the enemy's will at four o'clock this morning.

I have no intention of suggesting to the House that we should attempt, at this moment, to pass judgement upon the action of the King of the Belgians in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Belgian Army. This Army has fought very bravely, and has both suffered and inflicted heavy losses. The Belgian Government has dissociated itself from the action of the King, and has declared itself to be the only legal Government of Belgium and has formally announced its resolve to continue the war at the side of the Allies who came to the aid of Belgium at her urgent appeal. Whatever our feelings may be over the facts so far as they are known to us, the sense of brotherhood between the many peoples who have fallen under the power of the aggressor and those who still confront him will play its part in better days than those through which we are passing. . . .



ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION THAT WAS CENTRAL ROTTERDAM

History holds no parallel to the coldly calculated mass murder committed by the German Air Force in Rotterdam on Tuesday, May 14, 1940. With devilish thoroughness, two squadrons of 27 bombers each flew back and forth systematically over nearly two square miles of densely populated streets in the centre of the city, and deluged the utterly defenceless citizens with incendiary and 500-kilogram high explosive bombs. So complete was the devastation that only three buildings were left standing—all else was razed to the ground: 50,000 casualties were recorded, and of these the appalling total of 30,000 represented persons killed. Above is what was left of the Tuinderstraat, a once populous thoroughfare in a working-class district.

Photo, Wide World



BRITAIN AND BELGIUM WERE AGAIN ALLIED IN WAR

There was no mistaking the enthusiasm of the Belgian people when the B.E.F. entered their country to join forces with their own hard-pressed army, for Belgium remembered how British troops had assisted her in her former struggle with the invader. Above, Belgian soldiers and civilians unite in greeting lorryloads of smiling British soldiers.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



ONE BRIDGE THE NAZIS COULD NOT USE

The old university city of Louvain, scene of wanton destruction by the Germans in 1914, was again submerged by the tide of war in 1940. Above, a British sapper is seen preparing to blow up a bridge there after the last refugees have left. Below, all that remained of the bridge once the charge had been detonated.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright

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WAR-WEARY BELGIAN GUNNERS ON THE ROAD

Though the Belgian army resisted the invader with the utmost gallantry, the German pressure was too powerful for them to withstand and they were compelled to give ground. In the photograph above, weary Belgian artillerymen, many of them asleep on guns and limbers, are seen on a high road in the vicinity of Louvain.

Photo, British Official. Crown Copyright

BATTLE OF THE WEST: (3) THE BRITISH WITHDRAWAL & THE SURRENDER OF BELGIUM

British Withdrawal from Louvain—Gamelin's Order of the Day—Pétain Joins French Cabinet—Weygand Takes Supreme Command—Reynaud's Dramatic Statement—King Leopold Surrenders—Critical Situation of the British Expeditionary Force

(See also the account, based on later information, in Chapter 148)

While the French northern armies were engaged ever more heavily in the wooded Ardennes and on the Meuse, while the German armoured columns plunged through the broken line and roared here and there behind the front creating everywhere a veritable mêlée of destruction and disruption—the British in Belgium still held the positions which they had reached in the first day or two of the great offensive.

On the evening of May 10 their mechanized cavalry detachments had reached and seized the bridges over the Dyle to the north and south of Louvain. On the next day they had cautiously advanced a further ten miles or so, but had then withdrawn on making contact with enemy units in much superior force. This tentative excursion was followed by skirmishes and some fighting in the outskirts of Louvain, while the city—which had suffered so severely in the invasion of 26 years before—was subjected to periodical bombing. On May 15, however, heavy fighting broke out in the neighbourhood when the British troops were attacked by powerful enemy forces all along the line. The Germans made desperate attempts to dislodge the British and heavy fighting developed in the suburbs, while the city was subjected to heavy shelling and dive-bombing.

Following the collapse on the Meuse it was no longer possible to hold the line at Louvain, and shortly before midnight on May 17 the War Office announced that "during the night of May 16–17 certain readjustments to the front have become necessary. The B.E.F. was withdrawn to positions west of Brussels. This readjustment was carried out without interference; there is no question of any collapse or break-through in this sector as suggested by the German communiqué." The communiqué in question, issued by the German High Command at 9.52 p.m., had declared that "after the collapse of the British and French positions south of Louvain, German troops marched into Brussels late this afternoon." Somewhat earlier the Germans claimed they had reached the fortifications of Antwerp, that the line of the Dyle had been broken and both Malines and Louvain occupied.

Fall of Brussels

At this dark hour, on that May 17 when the French armies were broken on the Meuse and the British and Belgians were retreating in the north, General Gamelin issued an Order of the Day: "The fate of our country and that of our Allies, the destinies of the world, depend on the battle now in progress. British, Belgian, Polish soldiers and foreign volunteers are fighting at our side, and the Royal Air Force is taking its full part with our own. Any soldier who cannot advance should allow himself to be killed rather than abandon that part of our national soil which has been entrusted to him. As always in grave hours of our history, the Order of the Day is 'Conquer or die.' We must conquer."

Brave, even noble, words; but something more than words, however brave and noble, was needed to repair the gap left by those "incredible mistakes."

Falling back from the Meuse, the French were now holding a line in front of the Sambre to the north, from where to Mézières in the Sedan sector there had developed a dangerous bulge. In this bulge extremely heavy fighting was taking place, as, on the one hand, the Germans—who were employing two, and perhaps three, armoured divisions, each consisting of 400 tanks—did their best to widen it, while the French in successive counter-attacks strove to close it.

According to the German account the Maginot Line—in reality, as we have seen, it was but an extension of the Line—had been pierced over a distance of 100 kilometres, the enemy was in full retreat, and 12,000 prisoners and a number of guns had been captured. As for the northern sector, the German flag was now flying over Antwerp town hall, and in all the eastern half of Belgium only some of the forts of Liége and Namur continued their resistance.

Yet in Paris on May 19 there was quite a wave of optimism amongst the



PROVINCES OF CONTENTION

In the provinces of Eupen and Malmedy, which by the Treaty of Versailles were handed over to Belgium by Germany, Nazi troops were in May, 1940, welcomed by members of the National Front, an organization which had long been agitating for the return of these provinces to Germany. Some of them are seen above talking to Nazi soldiers.

Photo, International Graphic Press



GERMAN ARMY COMMANDER

Above is General Von Reichenau, who commanded the German 6th Army in Belgium. During the war of 1914-18 he was on the General Staff of the German Army.
Photo, International Graphic Press

Sunday morning crowds who filled the boulevards. On the Saturday evening M. Reynaud, in a broadcast to the nation, had declared that "the situation is grave, but not at all hopeless. It is in such circumstances as these," went on the Premier, "that the French nation shows what it is made of," and after announcing that he had called to his side to act as Minister of State and Vice-President the "victor of Verdun," Marshal Pétain, he concluded by saying that every Frenchman, whether he be in the army or at home, must that night join him in taking a solemn oath to win.

Events proved, however, that there was little justification for any feeling of optimism. All through the week-end the battle continued with unabated violence as Germany threw into the fight an enormous weight of men and metal. Not only did the bulge remain unclosed, but its shape became still more pronounced. Continuing their chorus of victory, the German High Command announced on that Sunday night that their troops had crossed the Sambre and the Oise, that Le Cateau and St. Quentin were in their hands, and that the Aisne had been reached at Rethel. "So far we have taken 110,000 prisoners without counting those belonging to the Dutch army." The situation was summed up by the British Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, in a broadcast message on the same evening—the first broadcast since he became Prime Minister ten days before. "A tremendous battle is raging in France and Flanders," he said. "The Germans by a remarkable combination of air bombing and heavily-armoured tanks have broken through the French defence north of the Maginot Line, and strong columns of their armoured vehicles are ravaging the open country, which for the first day or two was without defenders. They have penetrated deeply and spread alarm and confusion in their track. Behind them there are now pouring infantry in lorries, and behind them again large masses are moving forward." The Premier proceeded to tell of the regroupment of the French armies, and expressed his faith in the French genius for recovery and counter-attack. Yet it would be foolish to disguise the gravity of the hour. . . .

Memories of 1914-18

Nothing, perhaps, brought home the extent of the German advance so much as the appearance in the communiqués of the names of places which had been prominent in the fighting of the war of 1914-1918. German mechanized units were reported at Landrecies and Le Cateau, names for ever associated with the first B.E.F.; a great German thrust was developing near St. Quentin; and

LITTLE OIL FOR NAZIS HERE

Before the Nazis finally gained possession of the great Belgian port of Antwerp the retreating Allies set fire to the oil tanks on the banks of the Scheldt to prevent the valuable fuel from falling into the hands of the enemy. This photo of the heart of Antwerp shows the blazing oil tanks.
Photo, Central Press











THE CAPITULATION OF BRUSSELS

Top left, the Mayor of Brussels is surrendering the capital to a delegation of Nazi officers. Top right, a German anti-tank detachment entering the city on the morning of May 18, 1940. Left, Nazi pioneer troops clearing a bridge which had been damaged by the retreating Belgians. Below, two Nazi sentries stand guard as the German swastika is unfurled over the city hall of Belgium's capital.

Photos, Central Press; Associated Press; Keystone

there were several French counter-attacks in the neighbourhood of Péronne. No longer was it a question of closing a bulge created by the German mechanized columns; now it was clear a great German host, whose vanguard was an armada of warplanes, whose main body was a horde of tanks, and whose rear-guard was composed of countless divisions of sweating infantry, was making what seemed to be irresistible progress across north-eastern France. In Paris it was the general opinion that the French capital was the Germans' objective, but, as Hitler himself has told us, not Paris but the destruction of the Allied armies was his aim. Hence the determined effort to cut them off from the coast. Before the German onset the Allies—for the French had now been reinforced by such British troops, tanks and 'planes as could be spared and brought back from the northern sector—retreated from point to point, rather than from line to line. On the northern flank the British and Belgians were forced to keep step in the general retirement; only on the extreme right did the French line remain intact where it hinged near Montmédy on the first of the forts of the Maginot Line proper.

So grave had the situation become that the French Government, acting in consultation with its Allies in London, decided upon the drastic step of a change in the Supreme Command. On that same Sunday evening (May 19) it was announced in Paris that the President of the Republic had just signed a decree by which General Weygand was appointed Chief of the General Staff for National Defence and Commander-in-Chief in all the theatres of operations. General Weygand had arrived in Paris that day, having flown from Syria, where hitherto he had held the post of Allied Commander-in-Chief in the Near East. The appointment gave new heart to the Allies, for although Weygand was several years older than Gamelin, the man he replaced, he had been closely



GENERAL BILLOTTE

General Billotte, who commanded the 1st French Army Group, was in charge of liaison between the French, British and Belgian armies in Flanders. After a conference of Allied commanders at Ypres on May 22 he was killed in a motor accident.

Photo, Topical

associated with Marshal Foch in the closing months of the Great War, and to him also was generally ascribed the honour of defeating the Bolsheviks when they were at the very gates of Warsaw in 1920. His achievement had then been described as the "miracle of Warsaw"; now it was France which was in need of a miracle, and, such is the magic that attaches to great names, it was confidently believed that this 73-year-old general was the man who would work it. He himself, however (it came out later), was not so sure . . .

Certainly the next day observers professed to discern a break in the clouds that hovered so ominously above the battlefield in Flanders. There were indications that the Nazi drive towards Cambrai was slowing down; the German soldiers, it was said, were fatigued after ten days of desperate fighting, and the problem of supplying the German motorized columns which had pushed ahead of the main front was becoming ever more difficult. Moreover, several French counter-attacks were reported, and the air arm of the Allies had delivered innumerable attacks on the German columns. But only the most purblind optimists maintained that the situation was well in hand. None could speak with any certainty, indeed, of a battle or series of battles in which vast numbers of swiftly-moving machines moved here and there across the northern plain. On both sides the forces engaged were principally tank divisions; and in military circles in Paris it was confidently stated that the German infantry had not yet been engaged, and that when they entered upon the chaotic battlefield they would meet with strong resistance from the main forces of the French, which also, up to now, had hardly fired a shot.

But on May 21 the German drive, so far from slackening, was seen to have been intensified. "The greatest offensive operation of all time is now having its first operational success after individual tactical successes," declared a communiqué dated from the Fuehrer's headquarters. The Ninth French Army, which held the line between the Allies in Belgium and the Maginot Line, had been defeated and scattered, and now "German divisions are pouring into the breaches made by the German attack. At their head tank corps and motorized troops have taken Arras, Amiens, and Abbeville. All enemy—French, British and Belgian—armies north of the Somme have thus been driven back on to the Channel coast."



GENERAL WEYGAND

After the French débâcle General Gamelin, the French commander-in-chief, was superseded by General Weygand, previously commanding the French forces in the Levant. Above, General Weygand is seen leaving the casemate of one of the forts at Dunkirk.

Photo, Keystone

So bad was the news that in Paris men tried to convince themselves that it was too bad to be true. The German claims, it was argued, were premature; Arras and Amiens could not have been occupied by the Germans in strength, but had been merely raided by flying columns; it yet remained for the enemy to consolidate the gains which he had achieved. In London, too, Mr. Duff Cooper, the Minister of Information, in a broadcast said that the news was grave but there was no cause for serious alarm, as the "armies of Britain and France are undefeated. In enormously superior numbers they occupy the battlefield, and the counter-attack when it comes should prove formidable."

But there was little that was cheering in M. Reynaud's statement to the Senate on May 21. "The country is in danger," he said; and he went on to tell that the Meuse had been wrongly considered a redoubtable obstacle for the enemy; that the bridges over the river had not been destroyed, "as the result of incredible mistakes which will be punished"; that a breach of about 100 kilometres, or 60 miles, had been opened in the Allied front through which poured the German army, thus taking in



MARSHAL PETAIN

After the Germans had broken through the French defences many changes were made in the French Cabinet, and Marshal Pétain (above), was appointed Vice-Premier.

Photo, Sport & General

the rear the entire fortified system along the Franco-Belgium frontier and severing the Allied forces which had been engaged in Belgium until the evening of May 15, when they had received the order to retreat. Arras and Amiens had been occupied by the enemy. "But," the Premier went on, "General Weygand took command yesterday; he is today on the battlefield. The conduct of military operations falls to him alone . . ., we have confidence in the great leader who has taken over the command of our armies."

In the fighting on the next day—Wednesday, May 22—the British Expeditionary Force was heavily engaged between Cambrai and Arras, while the Belgians on the Scheldt were also severely tested. But the bulge which had begun on the Meuse had now moved with terrifying speed, and a great German wedge had been driven in between the Anglo-Franco-Belgian army roughly holding the line on Ghent, Valenciennes, Douai and Arras, and the French who were now entrenching themselves on the Somme and the Aisne. Obviously it was of supreme importance to close the gap, now some 30 miles wide, stretching between the two sections of the Allied armies, and on that same day there was a meeting of the Allied chiefs at Ypres at which General Weygand's plan for closing the gap was disclosed. In brief, it was intended that the French should attack northwards from the south from the direction of Roye, while the first French army and the B.E.F. should at the same time attack from the neighbourhood of Douai and Valenciennes. After the gap had been closed and communication re-established between the Allies in Belgium and north of the Somme, then the German spearhead of armoured columns would be tackled. The British Government approved the plan on May 23, and it was decided that the attack should be launched on May 26, as this was the earliest date on which the two British divisions selected—the 50th and the 5th—could be ready, as they had only a few hours before been heavily engaged at Arras and on the Scarpe in an attempt to close the gap—without the French support which had been promised. The French for their part would have preferred May 25, since they were planning to use three divisions which had had six days in which to reorganize since they were last in action. Sunday, May 26, was, then, the day selected for the launching of the attack which, it was fervently hoped, would close the fatal gap. But the gap was to remain unclosed.

The Gap Widens



NOTHING STEMMED THE NAZI FLOOD

Liége put up a gallant resistance to the invader, but the German thrust was too powerful. Above, Nazi troops are passing through the Place St. Lambert at Liége. Below, German soldiers are dismantling obstructions which the Belgians had erected across roads.

Photos, Associated Press; International Graphic Press



On May 25, attacking with fresh fury, the Germans overwhelmed the Belgian line and crossed the Scheldt near Oudenarde. Swiftly the Belgians were pushed back through and beyond Courtrai, northwards towards Bruges; and soon it was only too clear that their line was about to give. Lord Gort, Commander-in-Chief of the B.E.F., had to make a momentous decision, and in the circumstances it was inevitable that so far from employing his two reserve divisions in an attack towards the south, he should dispatch them immediately to bolster up the Belgians to the north. If he had failed to do so, another gap would have

Gort's Bold Decision



THE FUEHRER STUDIES HIS CONQUESTS

The photograph above, issued by the German propaganda service, shows Hitler during a visit to the Western Front studying a map with General Keitel, Chief of Staff of the German Army. The German blitzkrieg plans were successful as regards France and the Low Countries, but the price paid was undoubtedly heavy.

Photo, Planet News

developed—this time between the Belgians and the British—and the way of retreat of the B.E.F. to Dunkirk would have been cut off, and it would have fallen into the trap which Hitler and the Nazi High Command had laid for it. Indeed, on the afternoon of May 25 the Germans announced that the ring round the Belgian army, parts of the First, Seventh and Ninth French Armies, and the bulk of the B.E.F., was now definitely closed. Ghent and Courtrai had been captured and the Lys crossed; Vimy Ridge had been overrun; Douai was surrounded; Boulogne had been taken after a grim fight; Calais was hemmed in; all the Belgian and French Channel ports were being successfully bombed.

Across the Old Salient

German pressure in Belgium was intensified on May 26 as the Belgians made a last stand behind the little River Lys; Ypres, Poperinghe, Passchendaele and the Salient, which had cost the lives of so many tens of thousands of sons of Britain in the last war, were now once again in the very centre of the battle. Attacking with artillery, hordes of aircraft and hosts of tanks, the Germans suffered enormous losses, but no losses, however terrific, stayed their advance. Hour by hour the Allies were forced back across the flat fields with their network of dykes, canals and streams, their lines of willows and poplars. Soon the Germans were reported to be in St. Omer, while others moved eastwards along the coast from Calais, and yet others endeavoured to envelop the French troops making a gallant stand in Lille. Meanwhile, their air force continued its merciless bombing of Zeebrugge, Ostend, Dunkirk, and the neighbouring towns and villages of the coastal plain. The Belgian army was still in being: "in spite of the many and hard struggles which have been fought during the past two weeks," read the Belgian communiqué issued at 7 o'clock that evening, "and in spite of the difficult conditions under which our troops had to take up new positions, our forces have maintained their strength and morale."

Situation Becomes Critical

On that day and the next (Monday, May 27), the Belgians and British bore the brunt of the Nazi onslaught. Masses of infantry were hurled against the Belgian lines; their artillery fire, too, was most violent and the air above was filled with their fighters and dive bombers. Menin was the centre of the struggle, but on either side and, indeed, far to the south-west and along the French front from the Somme to the beginning of the Maginot Line proper, the battle raged with unexampled and undiminished fury. Writers in the Paris press were optimistic, putting their faith wholeheartedly in General Weygand; but those who were not so far removed from the battlefield realized that the situation could hardly be called other than critical.



FRENCH ARREST TWO SPIES

Fifth column activities were among the factors which led to the defeat of France, for spies and enemy agents were very active behind the lines. Above, two civilians suspected of spying are being marched by French soldiers through the cobbled streets of a small town on their way to interrogation by the military authorities.

Photo, Keystone









HEARTBREAK TREK OF BELGIAN REFUGEES

After a quarter of a century of uneasy peace the people of Belgium were forced once again to flee from the German invader. Our photographs show: 1, A homeless Belgian mother with her child; 2, an elderly couple at a refugee depot; 3, a little Belgian girl asleep with exhaustion over her father's shoulder; 4, nuns and young girls fleeing from the ruthless invader; 5, embarked in a trawler, these refugees seek safety in Britain.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Wide World; Planet News; "Daily Mirror"





TREES FORM EMERGENCY BARRICADE

So swift was the German advance through Northern France that unprotected areas, thought to be far from any field of battle, were soon in the centre of hostilities. Improvised barricades had to be hastily erected, and, above, trees have been felled across a road to delay, if only for a little, the relentless advance of the Nazi mechanized columns.

Photo, Associated Press

In particular, the British were in a difficult situation, with the Belgian line disintegrating on their left and only a few miles separating them from the handful of Channel ports that had not yet been captured by the Nazi columns. At 7 p.m.

Leopold Surrenders

Lord Gort's communiqué read: "Today the enemy violently attacked the French and Belgian forces on the flanks of the British Expeditionary Force. British infantry counter-attacked successfully in cooperation with French tanks. In Belgium, British forces fought side by side with the Belgian Army, meeting attacks of strong enemy forces. The British front remains intact."

Then on May 28 came the crowning disaster. At 4 a.m. that day the Belgian army was ordered by King Leopold to lay down its arms. (His final proclamation to his troops is printed in page 1536.) Harsh words were uttered about this surrender: "The Belgian army," said M. Reynaud in a broadcast to the French people a few hours later, "at the height of the battle has unconditionally, and without warning its British and French comrades in arms, suddenly capitulated on the orders of its King, and opened the road to Dunkirk to the German divisions." Eighteen days ago, continued the Premier, King Leopold had addressed to them an appeal for help, to which they at once responded. "Then, without one thought, without one word for the British and French soldiers who came to the help of his country on his anguished appeal, King Leopold III of the Belgians laid down his arms. It is a fact without precedent in history."

The Belgian Government, which had already left the country, dissociated itself from the action of its King, and many Belgian soldiers continued to fight in France; but in Belgium itself the "cease fire" was obeyed and 300,000 men laid down their arms.

As a result of the Belgian capitulation the French and British in the north were left in grave peril. At one blow their left flank had collapsed and they were now facing the imminent risk of being completely surrounded.

In Britain, Mr. Churchill asked that judgement should be suspended upon King Leopold's action, and he paid a tribute to the Belgian Army, which had fought very bravely and had both suffered and inflicted heavy losses. The surrender of the Belgians, he went on, added appreciably to the grievous peril in which the British and French Armies now found themselves. Their position, engaged as they were in a most severe battle and beset on three sides and from the air, was evidently extremely grave. Nevertheless, he declared, "the troops are in good heart and are fighting with the utmost discipline and tenacity."



BELGIAN ARMY'S HUMILIATION

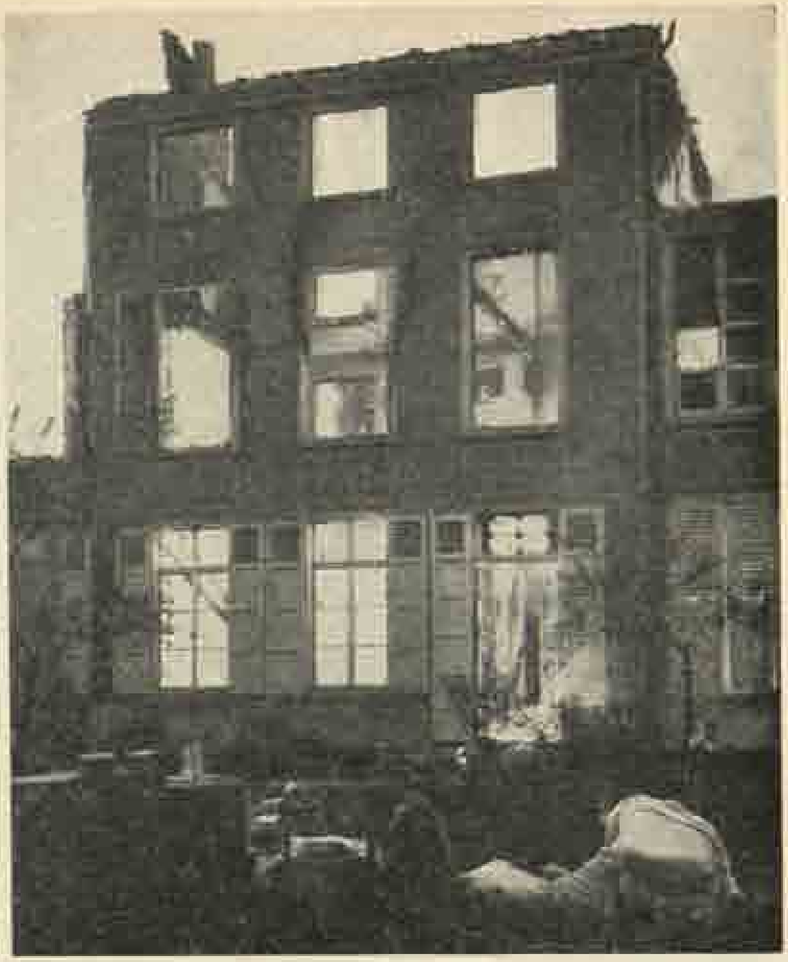
On May 28, 1940, the King of the Belgians ordered his troops to lay down their arms. Above, the car carrying the German intermediary is seen approaching the Belgian headquarters to negotiate details of the Belgian surrender. Left, Belgian soldiers marching to the assembly stations for surrender. Below, a street strewn with abandoned equipment.

Photos, Wide World; Associated Press









LOUVAIN ONCE MORE A MARTYRED CITY

Louvain, ravaged in 1914 by the Germans, was again a scene of destruction in May 1940, when the invading Nazis were held up there for some time by the B.E.F. Our photographs show: above, the University Library, rebuilt after the last war with American aid and again destroyed in 1940; top, right, a convent gutted by fire; right, British motorized troops passing through a ruined street of Louvain. Below, a sketch map of the city showing the main buildings.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; E.N.A.





BRITAIN COMES TO THE AID OF BELGIUM: THE OPERATIONS AROUND LOUVAIN

British Divisions in Position Near Louvain—Mr. E. A. Montague's Narrative—In the Forward Line—German Dive-bombers Attack—Shelling of Louvain—The Line of the River Dyle—Our Heavy Batteries in Action—British Line Turned—Withdrawal to the Escaut—Story of the Grenadiers

Entering Belgium at daybreak on May 10, the motorized units of the B.E.F. sped along the cobbled, poplar-lined highways that stretched away into the distance across the Flanders plain. By the end of the day the most advanced of them had reached the neighbourhood of Louvain, and there they took up their positions while the main body of the army drew ever nearer on its march. They could hear in the distance the roar of the battle in which the Belgians were engaged with the invaders not far within the frontier, but as yet the only hostile activity they encountered was when the mechanized patrols clashed in the open country some miles ahead or when an occasional Nazi 'plane dive-bombed on the slowly-assembling men in khaki.

By May 14 the British divisions were in position. Material was still coming up, but the main part of the advance had been completed in spite of the enemy's aerial activity and, still more, of the struggling masses of refugees who were moving slowly back along the roads they had come by.

The British line followed the course of the River Dyle, and its centre was in the old city of Louvain—hardly recovered from its wounds of the last war, and now about to be wounded afresh. Practically all the civilians had been evacuated, and the town was empty save for British and Belgian troops who were ensconced in shallow pits, half pit and half breastwork, which they had made in the pavements by uprooting the paving-stones and piling up stones and earth in little heaps. "In front of the Town Hall," wrote Mr. E. A. Montague, Special Correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian," "a Belgian and a British officer marshalled the last of the refugees and put the frailest of them into two civilian cars, the last remaining in the town. Above them the Belgian flag still flew on the Town Hall.

"When the pitiful little party had moved away, a silence that was deep and heavy with expectancy fell on the town. The crash of guns near at hand, the drone of 'planes, and the harsh rattling of transport trucks broke it for a moment, and then were swallowed up again. Sappers lay quietly on mattresses taken from deserted houses and spread on the pavement, conserving their strength for the work of demolition to come.

"The men in the pavement pits did not speak . . . the stillness seemed to compel them. Somewhere out in the country beyond the bridge the German tanks were nosing their way cautiously towards the hidden defences. In silence the front waited."

British Front Line

The next morning Mr. Montague left his car in the support line and walked forward through the fields, past glass-houses which still preserved their glass, through standing corn which would never be harvested, and a hamlet in which a photograph of a girl had fallen from a refugees' farm cart and lay face downwards in the dust. Almost the only sound was the lowing of abandoned cows, imploring somebody to milk them.

"We reached our most forward positions almost before we had realized it," wrote Mr. Montague, who soon discovered that, though there were few soldiers in sight, there were plenty lying near by in close concealment, hidden from the German guns which were periodically spraying the area in an experimental way.

"Our own guns were replying, and the singing whine of British and German shells crossing each other made an arc

B.E.F. MOVES INTO BELGIUM

At daybreak on May 10, 1940, motorized units of the B.E.F. sped along the cobbled roads of Flanders into the heart of Belgium. Below, British motor-cyclists passing over the level crossing of a Belgian frontier town. A motorized detachment of the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers was among the first British troops to cross into Belgium.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



of sound above the little River Dyle, which at this point runs between the two armies. Shells pitched and exploded among the trees or on the open hillsides and smoke drifted up over the crests, but it was difficult to get any clear picture of what was happening. In fact both sides were still exploring and fumbling for a grip."

Some way back the first of the few British casualties were being treated at an advanced dressing station, and men, tired after days of marching and periods of duty in the line, were sleeping in their billets. Refugees were still straggling away towards the rear, walking behind wagons drawn by horses or oxen, piled high with their belongings. Occasionally a stray civilian was brought into Company Headquarters, there to be closely examined, for already the British had learned to beware of German parachutists in civilian dress who might be dropped behind their lines.

Behind the Line

Later in the day the British troops were heavily engaged along the whole of their front. Wave after wave of German 'planes swept over the battlefield, dive-bombing on the troops in their trenches, on the gun positions and the machine-gun posts, and doing their utmost to render the roads behind the line impassable. At times the German aircraft flew so low that their iron cross markings were plainly visible, but they paid a high price for their temerity when British anti-aircraft batteries found them an easy target. The weather, sunny and clear and warm, was ideal for air activity; and the British 'planes, too, worked unceasingly, striving to protect the troops on the ground and to drive off the swarms of Heinkels and Junkers which appeared from everywhere.

"Columns of blue smoke rose into the bright blue sky," wrote Mr. Douglas Williams, War Correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," who was an eyewitness of the battle, "and the smell of burning fills the nostrils. Wooden houses burn like tinder in many villages. Flames started by incendiary bombs spread rapidly. Many inhabitants, terrified by the bursting of bombs, are unable to make any attempt to check them." He went on to tell of the pitiful sights he had seen in the villages just behind the line—of smashed furniture with burning bedding gaping through the splintered windows, of ruined houses, of long streams of refugees following the roads, struggling along on foot or on bicycles, all hurrying away from the scenes of terror that lay behind them. Then, turning his eyes to the east, he watched a fierce artillery duel between British and German batteries. Bursting shells echoed down the valley, and the wood on the farther rise was burning furiously. A village in the middle distance was being heavily shelled and already several direct hits had been registered on the church.

Louvain was in the very forefront of the battle. In the afternoon it was heavily shelled—not the first nor the last of many similar bombardments. "When I visited it a couple of days ago," wrote Mr. Douglas Williams, "it was already almost deserted. Its railway station had been bombed, and houses near the University had been destroyed. The bulk of the city's civilian population had been already evacuated. The University was still standing complete in all its grandeur, its walls still inscribed with the names of American universities and schools which contributed to its rebuilding. By nightfall or tomorrow . . . this magnificent edifice may once again be in ruins."



FIRST V.C.s FOR THE ARMY

On the left is 2nd Lieut. R. W. Annand, Durham Light Infantry, who gained his decoration for displaying most conspicuous gallantry when in command of his platoon on May 15-16, 1940. Though wounded, he repeatedly attacked the enemy single-handed while defending a blown bridge over the River Dyle. Company Sergt.-Major Gristock, Royal Norfolk Regt., whose V.C. was given posthumously, put an enemy machine-gun position out of action despite severe wounds when his company was holding the line of the River Escaut, south of Tournai, on May 21. The story of Lance-Corporal Nicholls' heroic deed is related in this chapter.

Photos, British Official; Crown Copyright; Sport & General; Associated Press



THE FIGHTING WITHDRAWAL TO DUNKIRK

This map shows the successive stages of the German advance from May 13, 1940, to May 26 (see reference in p. 874 for details). The lines in white refer to the actions fought by the Grenadier Guards during the advance into and withdrawal from Belgium. (See also colour maps, pp. 1538-9.)

Relief map specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Felix Gardon*

Attacking in force, the Germans captured the station and two other points on the outskirts of Louvain, but during the night the British delivered a powerful counter-attack which drove out the Germans from the places they had secured. All through the next day (May 16) sharp fighting and house-to-house sniping went on in the suburbs and on the western side of the city near the Dyle; and all day, too, the city, particularly its western fringes, was subjected to heavy shelling by the Germans.

"From a ridge two miles from and overlooking the city," wrote Mr. Douglas Williams, "I watched the scene of the battle. I could see clouds of smoke drifting upwards, while the whole countryside was tainted with the acrid smell of tobacco from a factory which had been burning for two days. The German heavy explosive shells of considerable size and occasional rounds of shrapnel burst at regular intervals in the valley some 300 or 400 yards away between us and the city."

Smoke of Battle

While the battle was still going on he encountered a party of Poor Clare nuns who were being carried from the city in a British army lorry. They were among the last of the civilians to be evacuated, and one of their number, Sister Marie Claire, told him that their community had suffered the "most terrible nights" since the Friday before (May 10). Shells and bombs, she said, had fallen constantly in and around the city. Several of the older sisters, including the aged Mother Superior, had had to be left behind in the city as they were unable to travel. "Where will you go to now?" Douglas Williams asked the little party, who appeared already worn and travel-stained. "We don't know," they replied, "we hope someone will take us in. We have no plans. All we wanted was to get away from the city." And she glanced back apprehensively to where a British battery hidden in a wood was banging away at the Germans.

Yet the countryside was strangely somnolent, as we may see from this little word picture.

"Sheep still grazed in the pasture," wrote Mr. Williams; "hens ran about the courtyard; fruit and vegetables were growing in profusion in the garden. A child's swing hung from an old tree. On the tennis courts a couple of rackets lay where they had been flung after the last game played only a few days ago. In another farmhouse near a British battalion everything stood as the owners had left it. Food was on the table; the beds were unmade; the watch-dog waited in his kennel for his master to return; a little pet canary, released from its cage, hopped forlornly in the yard. Pigs still rooted in the sty, and outside the farm-gate cows swollen with milk mooed unhappily."

But the roads, at least, were filled with movement as along them in the direction of Brussels continued the unending stream of refugees. "Some trundled cumbersome packages loaded on bicycles; others had their possessions rolled in red blankets and slung around their necks. Children rode on the handle-bars or back seats of motor-cycles. Others pick-a-backed on their brother's or father's shoulders. In every field along the road as I drove by at six in the morning, groups of these unhappy people were sleeping or washing, dressing or cooking impromptu meals. Their horses cropped the grass beside them. As we approached the forward areas of the enemy's positions traffic became less and less, and the long, empty roads had a sinister quiet in the hot sunshine. Houses were all shuttered and deserted; fields empty of farmers."

At one point he came across the colonel of a London regiment sitting in a wheatfield giving a lecture to a little group of his men on the conditions of the particular area that they were occupying. For half an hour our correspondent sat there watching the eager faces of the young soldiers who listened with keen interest to their colonel, ignoring shells bursting a thousand yards away.



BRITAIN'S YOUTH ON BELGIAN ROADS ONCE MORE

In the photograph above young British soldiers are driving a motor-truck along Belgian roads where their fathers might have driven horse-drawn G.S. wagons a quarter of a century before. Below, a file of British soldiers marches up towards the battle-line, passing Belgian refugees.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Keystone



After a hard day's fighting the nine divisions of the B.E.F. still occupied the line of the Dyle and the ridges behind. At one or two places the Germans had managed to cross the river in some force, but by nightfall they had all been driven back as the result of a counter-attack in which men of a North Country regiment particularly distinguished themselves. In the fighting in Louvain itself exceptionally good work was done by an Irish regiment and a battalion of the Grenadier Guards, who were heavily engaged with enemy patrols near the station and along the railway to the north. The Grenadiers also succeeded in restoring the line on May 15, when the Germans crossed the canal and established a machine-gun post; this was engaged and destroyed by mortars.

Throughout the three days' battle the Royal Artillery was heavily engaged. One incident may be quoted, when the howitzers and guns of a heavy regiment were presented with a target that might truly be described as a gunner's dream. From a heavy battery observation-post hidden among wooded slopes on the Dyle's west bank a sharp look-out was kept over the country on the other side. In the valley below there was desultory machine-gun and mortar fire, and a hillside to all appearances empty and lifeless beyond the town of Wavre was shelled occasionally by the German guns. Then one of the look-outs noticed a small cloud of dust rising from a fold in the cornfields, and a quick glance at the map revealed that there was a valley along which ran a farm track through a wood overlooking the town.

A Gunner's Dream

Something was going on in that valley where the puff of dust had been spotted; something worth shooting at was evidently about to use the wood as a hidden assembly place. Orders were given, and two batteries of heavy howitzers were ranged on to a convenient point some considerable distance from the wood. Meanwhile, down the sunken road a continuous stream of tanks and lorries flowed on until well over a hundred were gathered in the imagined security of the wood. When fire was opened the Germans were taken completely by surprise. A second salvo of eight shells arrived before the first of the enemy were to be seen leaving their hiding place. The Battery Commander had time to drop another round of gunfire into the concentration before the target became too dispersed to be worth further expenditure of ammunition.

By May 17 the German thrust through the French armies to the south

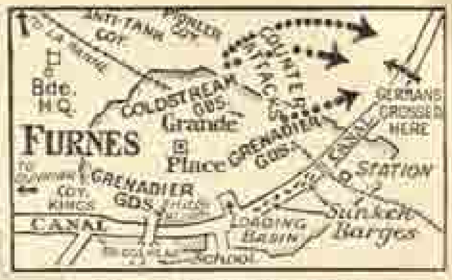
had turned the line of the Dyle, and the B.E.F., though unbroken in action and quite capable of continuing its resistance on the line which had been chosen, was compelled to withdraw as part of the Allied strategical plan. The German High Command on May 17 announced that their troops had broken through the Allied positions on the Dyle, while Louvain itself was in their hands after an encircling attack; a few hours later, too, they captured Brussels. Meanwhile, the B.E.F. was making an orderly withdrawal—first to the Senne and then to the Dendre.

Here, on May 18, three battalions of Grenadier Guards, "X," "Y," and "Z," found themselves side by side. Presently a German patrol of motor-cycles headed by a motor-car appeared on the opposite bank of the river, just as the commander of one company of "Y" battalion was making a reconnaissance. He himself opened fire with an anti-tank rifle and knocked out the car. A burst from a Bren gun then swept the motor-cyclists, who took refuge in a house, and mortar fire destroyed the house. No more trouble was experienced from the enemy patrol, but in the fighting which now ensued the sniping activities of Fifth Columnists continued to be very troublesome.

The Enemy Patrol

By this time the German break-through to the south necessitated a new withdrawal to the line of the River Escaut (Scheldt). The Grenadier battalions took up positions on the western bank of the river (see relief map in page 875), with their left on Helchin. On May 21 the enemy opened violent artillery, mortar and machine-gun fire and launched numerous determined attacks. These were repulsed, but in one place a crossing was forced and some companies of "Z" battalion had to fall back. The position was under direct enemy observation, there was no cover, and every movement drew destructive fire. The crew of a Bren gun carrier did splendid work driving across country and spotting the positions of the enemy machine-guns. A counter-attack was immediately ordered, and it was then that Lance-Corporal H. Nicholls picked up a Bren gun and, firing from the hip as he ran, silenced three machine-guns and inflicted heavy casualties on massed enemy infantry, who were forced back across the Escaut. For this action Lance-Corporal Nicholls was awarded the V.C.

"X" and "Y" battalions held the Escaut position for four days, before withdrawing to a prepared position on the Gort Line east of Roubaix, which they held for three or four days. On the Gort Line a patrol of "Y" battalion was reconnoitring a farm when the farmer offered the men coffee and then disappeared. Within 20 minutes the patrol was surrounded. It put up a spirited resistance, killing many Germans, and suffered no casualties.





THE GUARDS LIVE UP TO THEIR REPUTATION

After a magnificent stand at Louvain, some of the Grenadier Guards fell back on Furnes (left) and there made a counter-attack (see map, from a sketch by Brigadier J. A. C. Whitaker, who was present at the action. Refer also to map on pp. 874 and 875). Below are some of the fine types of men who make up the Grenadier Guards, seen in forward positions in France.
Photos, British Official; E.N.A.; Map, "Daily Telegraph"



When the decision was taken to evacuate the B.E.F., the battalions were soon on the move again in the direction of Dunkirk. "Z" battalion had just crossed the River Lys after a long and tiring march when it was learnt that the enemy had broken through on the right, between Commines and Ypres, and that the battalion was to restore the situation. It made a counter-attack and, after a hazardous advance across open country, the battalion reached its objective and held it in spite of repeated and determined enemy efforts. Eventually it was ordered to withdraw to Messines, and then it made its way to Meeres, where it was ordered to be ready to support a brigade which was being hard pressed south of Furnes. The ground was reconnoitred, but the battalion's services were not called upon.

Meanwhile, "X" and "Y" battalions marched on Furnes, where again there was a danger of the enemy breaking through. A reconnaissance party consisting of the Commanding Officer of "Y" and two company commanders came under fire and were all hit. A young officer found them lying in an exposed position in the main street of the town, which was raked by machine-gun fire. Displaying complete disregard of his own safety, under heavy machine-gun and rifle fire, he carried the Commanding Officer, who was dead, and the two company commanders, who were wounded, into the doorway of a house.

But the enemy's fire was so heavy that no stretcher-bearers could approach, and an entry had to be forced from the back. "X" and "Y" battalions took up positions and were subjected to an intense and accurate bombardment, which was obviously directed by enemy agents on the spot, and a telephone was actually found in the church tower. A reserve ammunition truck was hit and set on fire, but the mortar bombs were unloaded before they could explode and were put to good use in blowing up two German mortar positions. Many houses in the town were burning furiously, and the situation was made still more uncomfortable by the fact that little artillery support was available and no counter-battery fire could be given. Meanwhile, the enemy launched repeated and determined attacks and attempted to cross the canal in rubber boats. All these attempts were frustrated; a section of "Y" battalion under a lance-corporal drove out and killed 20 Germans while itself suffering only one casualty.

Farther to the north two line battalions were hard pressed and a gap was opened between them. Soon after midday news reached "Y" battalion headquarters that the enemy was crossing the canal unopposed. The same young officer who had dragged the dead C.O. and the two wounded company commanders into cover was sent to learn the exact position. He had with him the Bren carrier platoon. By resolute leadership he rallied the troops on the spot and led them back to the canal in a counter-attack. His action averted an enemy break-through between the brigade area and the sea.

Fateful Counter-Attack

During this time the transport column and other details of "Z" battalion had been ordered to the neighbourhood of Dunkirk, there to destroy all their trucks except those carrying arms, food and ammunition. All the vehicles were present and in good order, and the melancholy task of destruction was duly performed. The personnel then made their way to the sea at La Panne, where there was indescribable confusion. Trucks, wagons and cars, abandoned under orders by British units, were being plundered and driven away by civilians and other nondescript people. The men of the transport column armed themselves with all the Bren guns and anti-tank rifles they could collect and established a post across the road, enforcing order and putting a stop to the pilfering. Next, they contributed to the defence of the position at Furnes by holding a front of half a mile along the canal east of the town. The situation at Furnes was saved and the final withdrawal to the sea made possible. But the epic of Dunkirk is the subject of a later Chapter.

ABANDONED GUNS AT LA PANNE

After making a splendid stand along the Dyle and then the Scheldt, the B.E.F. was forced eventually to withdraw. Some units marched on Furnes, and below are seen anti-aircraft guns on the sea front of La Panne near by, abandoned when the B.E.F. was ordered to retire upon Dunkirk.
Photo, E.N.A.

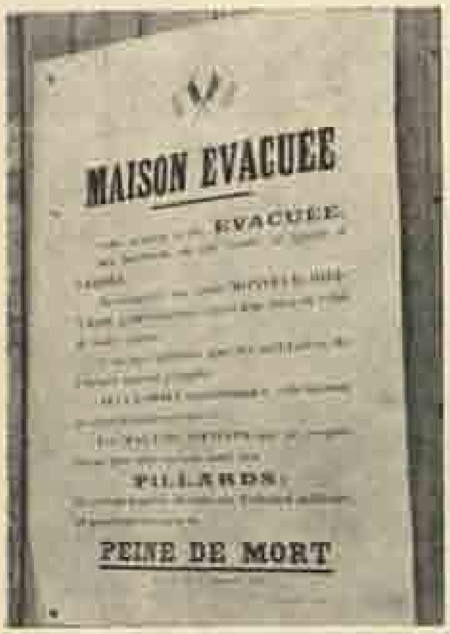


ON THE EVE OF DUNKIRK: WITHDRAWAL BEHIND THE 'CORUNNA LINE'

After the Belgian Surrender—Plight of the Allied Armies in Flanders—Stubborn Rearguard Actions—Loss of Armentières and Bailleul—Germans Take Lille—Two French Divisions Cut Their Way Out—What was Happening on the Somme—Behind the 'Corunna Line' the B.E.F. Withdraws to Dunkirk

(See also Chapters 147-148, on Lord Gort's Despatches)

With the surrender of the 300,000 Belgians—all that was left of King Leopold's army—who had been holding the Allied line between Ypres and Ostend, the northern flank of the B.E.F. was exposed to the enemy attack, and the possibility of being cut off from the coast became imminent. On their right the French, too, found themselves in a truly desperate situation. Yet there were no gaps in the line and no confusion, although it was obvious that retreat to the coast was inevitable.



ARMY GUARDS FRENCH HOMES

This proclamation placed evacuated French houses under the care of the army. "The inhabitants," reads the notice, "count upon our military honour to preserve intact their property . . . Bad soldiers who do not respect this house are looters; they will be brought before a Military Tribunal and may incur the death penalty."

Photo, Section Cinéma de l'Armée

"The French and British troops fighting in Northern France," read the communiqué issued in Paris on the night of May 29, "are maintaining with a heroism worthy of their traditions a struggle of exceptional intensity. For a fortnight past they have been fighting a battle separated from the main body of our armies by German formations which are being constantly reinforced. Although ceaselessly attacked on their two flanks from the east and west, they are disputing every inch of the ground to the enemy and clinging to their ground or counter-attacking with as much stubbornness as bravery." While facing this assault, the communiqué went on, the road to Ypres, to Furnes and to Dunkirk was laid open to the enemy when the Allied army under the direct command of King Leopold received from its King the order to cease fire. "Since then our troops under the command of General Blanchard and General Prioux, in close collaboration with the British Army under Lord Gort, have had to face an increased danger. Showing in these grave circumstances indomitable resolution, they are making every effort to manoeuvre towards the coast at the price of very hard fighting."

An authoritative statement issued in London stressed what hardly needed stressing, that the B.E.F. was in no sense a beaten force. Everything the British troops had been asked to do they had done. They had never been beaten back, they had never been broken. Every time they had been asked to counter-attack they had done so successfully, and every time they had been ordered to withdraw they had done so in good order. Never once had they lost discipline or morale. "Every time they have found themselves pitted against the Germans man to man they have proved themselves the better, just as their brothers in the Navy and Air Force."

Marching and fighting continuously for over a fortnight with little rest, bombed continually, shelled and attacked by tanks, they had never wavered. The men could never have done what they had done without confidence and trust in their leaders; this confidence could never have existed had not the officers themselves shown all the qualities of leadership. Great difficulties had confronted the officers—not merely the normal difficulties of war, but, in addition, roads blocked by thousands of refugees, communications bombed and destroyed; but, in spite of all, the B.E.F. had moved as a coherent whole throughout the operations. Now once again they stood at bay—in grievous peril, as Mr. Churchill said, but in good heart. Nevertheless, the Premier went on to tell the House of Commons that it should prepare itself for hard and heavy tidings. At that moment it might well seem that nothing short of a miracle could have saved the B.E.F. from encirclement and eventual surrender; the epic of Dunkirk was yet to come.

On the eve of their new and greater ordeal the troops were cheered by a



THESE WERE NO DEFEATISTS

Left, General Blanchard, who commanded the Allied armies in the North during the rearguard action towards Dunkirk; right, General Prioux, in command of the French forces during that perilous exploit.

Photos, Associated Press; E.N.A.





WHEN OSTEND WAS NO PLACE FOR TOURISTS

The photograph at the top of the page shows a pall of smoke hanging over the Gare Maritime at Ostend, well-known to thousands of cross-Channel tourists. The photo was taken by a British officer during the gallant rearguard action of the B.E.F. covering the retreat towards the Channel ports. Lower photo shows British infantry moving along a road in Flanders.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Planet News

message which the King sent to Lord Gort—which, after saying with what pride and admiration their countrymen had been watching the courageous resistance of the B.E.F., went on to declare that "the hearts of every one of us at home are with you and with your magnificent troops in this hour of peril."

Meanwhile, the fierce mêlée of battle was proceeding on the Flanders plain. From hour to hour it was difficult to follow the developments of the struggle, but so far as the left flank was concerned, it was all too obvious that a retreat along the coast to Dunkirk should be carried out at the earliest moment. For Ostend was already in enemy hands, and the German vanguard, having passed through and leaving behind it masses of sullen and silent disarmed Belgians, was reported to be at Dixmude. So, fighting a series of most stubborn rearguard actions, the British fell back from the banks of the Yser and the Yser Canal, where there had been fighting of a most desperate nature. Armentières was abandoned again after fierce fighting, and so, too, was Bailleul. To the south, Lille, which had been held by the French, was now claimed by the enemy, and General Prioux, Commander of the French First Army, was reported to have been captured near Cassel with many of his staff. Two of the French divisions fought their way out of the German



BELGIANS FLEE THE HUN ONCE MORE

To block the roads and hinder military traffic was one of Germany's first aims on the outbreak of the blitzkrieg in May, 1940, and for that reason open Belgian towns were wantonly attacked from the air to cause panic and start a flow of refugees. A scene from one of these German raids is depicted above; civilians are leaving with what household goods they can transport.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



BELGIUM IN 1940 REPEATS A 1915 SCENE

Bearing a remarkable similarity to photographs taken in France during 1914–18 is this one of Royal Irish Fusiliers near the front line in Belgium during the German offensive of May, 1940. Subsequent fighting showed that the spirit of the British Army had changed even less than had its appearance since the war of a generation before.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



GATEWAY TO DEEDS OF BRITISH GLORY

Familiar to thousands of British soldiers during the war of 1914-18 was the Menin Gate at Ypres, where afterwards the new gateway, seen above, a Memorial to the Missing of the Salient, was erected. Here men of the 12th Lancers are seen before the Menin Gate in May, 1940, awaiting the German onslaught. This time, alas, Ypres could not be saved.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

trap, however, and struggled northward to join the British on the road to Dunkirk. There was now, of course, no question of an attempt to rejoin the main French armies, who were massing behind the Somme and the Aisne.

Hurricanes and Spitfires maintained offensive patrols over the Dunkirk area. Without the R.A.F. the withdrawal of the Allied armies from the trap so confidently laid by the enemy would have been impossible.

While the troops in ever-increasing numbers dribbled through to Dunkirk and safety, a line of defence was maintained by the divisions constituting the Allied rearguard. To the British this line became known as the "Corunna Line," in honour of that other great rearguard action which resulted in a British army being taken off in safety from beneath the very nose of the enemy. To some extent the line consisted of entrenchments and bastions of earth hastily thrown up, but its chief strength lay in the deliberate flooding of the Yser valley, a defence measure which converted the fields across which the Germans must advance into a watery expanse.

Behind the Corunna Line, defended with cool bravery by some of the crack



Needless to say, the German High Command were in an ebullient mood. "Continuing their annihilating attack on the British Expeditionary Force, the German troops took Ypres and the Kemmel Ridge by storm"—so began their communiqué issued on May 29. "The fate of the French armies in Artois is sealed. Their resistance south of Lille has broken down. The British Army, which is pressed together in the area between Dixmude, Armentières, Bailleul, and Bergues, west of Dunkirk, is threatened with annihilation by the German concentric attacks."

A day later they announced that "the great battle in Flanders and Artois is drawing to a close with the annihilation of the British and French armies fighting in that area. Since yesterday the British Expeditionary Force also is in complete dissolution. The British troops are in headlong flight in the direction of the coast, leaving all their incalculable war material in German hands. Swimming and in small boats, they try to reach the British ships lying in the roads—ships attacked by the German Air Force with devastating results."

Wishful Thinking

It was over Dunkirk, indeed, that the British fighters and bombers showed beyond a doubt that they were more than a match for the Luftwaffe. Day and night the bombers kept up their pressure on the enemy's lines of communication—on his tanks, motorized columns and troops, while formations of



MORE HAVOC IN ARMENTIERES

Armentières, celebrated in song and almost entirely destroyed during the war of 1914-18, was again badly damaged in the Battle for France in 1940. Top, left, is a street of the town before the war, with the Church of St. Vaast in the background. Above, a building in Armentières ablaze after German air bombing.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; A. J. Insall, Copyright A.P.











FRANCE IN THE GRIP OF WAR

In this page are scenes of the Battle of France. 1, a detachment of French soldiers lining an embankment; 2, a French mounted unit on the march; 3 and 4, a church steeple, a landmark for miles around, photographed during the bombardment of a French town: on the left it is seen a minute or two before being hit by a shell, while on the right it is crashing to earth after a direct hit; 5, French infantry on their way up to the line.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Section Cinéma de l'Armée



TANKS OF THE BLITZKRIEG

Mechanized units in the Battle of France. Above, Nazi tanks in Flanders find progress difficult through flooded roads; circle, a German armoured car shattered by a direct hit; below, abandoned French tanks in Avesnes-les-Aubert (near Cambrai); bottom, a heavy French tank going up to the battle.

Photos, Associated Press; E.N.A.; Planet News







regiments of the British army, hundreds of thousands of British and French troops were enabled to reach Dunkirk, and from Dunkirk passed to the waiting ships which carried them across the Channel to England. How ludicrous was the assertion that the British were fleeing in disorder, that the B.E.F. was in dissolution, is clear from the fact that 335,000 men, British and French, were safely embarked. It was no disorganized rabble that fought the battle of Dunkirk, but an army of seasoned veterans that played a most valiant part in that "miracle of deliverance."

The retreat to Boulogne and the heroic defences of that town and of Calais are described in Chapter 89.

We must now glance at the position along the great river barrier where the French armies, aided by units of the B.E.F. which had been left in that region, were preparing for a desperate stand against the enemy onslaught that was bound to come once the fate of the Allied armies in Flanders should be decided. The longer the Northern Army held out, the better the southern front could be consolidated.

Position on the Somme

On the Somme, a French communiqué of May 26 announced, French troops continued to mop up German units that had crossed the river four or five days previously. Next day French troops were in action from near the mouth of the Somme at Abbeville to the region of Ham and Péronne: several bridge-heads were retaken from the Germans. At the "Charnière," or hinge, where the line swung leftwards and westwards near Montmédy, there was as yet no disquietude: the hinge held good, and at this joint in the armour of defence all went well despite murderous enemy assaults.

Heavy German attacks at Montmédy on the 28th were driven back, said the French report. The German communiqué of May 29 said that isolated attacks by French infantry had been repulsed by tanks. The French line now ran from the Luxemburg border to Attigny, and thence along the Aisne. The northernmost forts of Montmédy and Laferte were still holding out and exacting a fearful price from the enemy. In Champagne the Germans were increasing their pressure. Low-flying bombers, with armoured divisions, tried to batter a way through, aided by masses of infantry. On the Somme, during the 29th, things were fairly quiet, and the enemy made only local attacks as yet. A raid to the south-west of Château Porcien (on the north bank of the Aisne, near Rethel) was repulsed.

M. Reynaud, the French Premier, in a broadcast made in the evening of May 28, said that "in the South there are French divisions who hold a new front which follows the Somme and the Aisne and then joins up with the intact Maginot Line." The French communiqué issued on May 30 spoke of fighting along the valleys of those two rivers on the previous day and claimed local successes. The last of the bridge-heads which the enemy had established on the left bank of the Somme had been recaptured.

The region of Abbeville was again in French hands on the last day of May, recaptured from the Germans after two days of fierce fighting. In this brilliant operation the Germans lost several motorized columns, but not a single French tank was taken by the enemy.

German aircraft bombed Marseilles and other towns in south-east France on June 1; next day enemy raids were made on the Rhône valley. The region of Lyons, attacked on June 1, was again raided. After a meeting in Paris of the Imperial War Cabinet





HUMANITY MEANS NOTHING TO NAZIS

Following their declared principle of total warfare the Nazis, with complete ruthlessness, bombed and machine-gunned Red Cross trains and ambulances. Above, an ambulance train, clearly marked, demolished by Nazi bombs. Top right, a French ambulance, plainly bearing the Red Cross, riddled by bomb splinters.

Photos, Service Cinéma de l'Armée; Service Cinématographique de l'Air



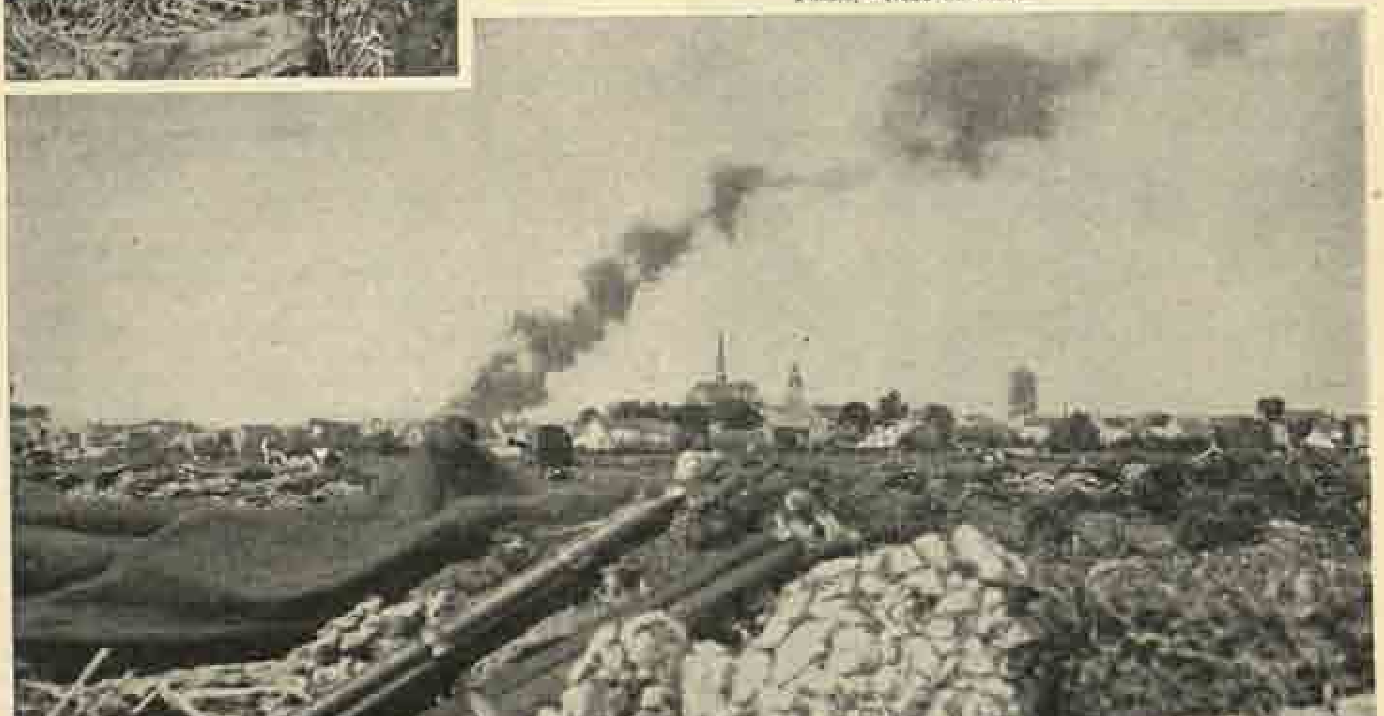




ROYAL ULSTER RIFLES AT DUNKIRK

Among the regiments which took part in the epic withdrawal to Dunkirk was the Royal Ulster Rifles, by one of whose officers the photographs in this page were taken. Top, Royal Ulster Rifles in hastily dug trenches in the vicinity of Dunkirk. Left, one man takes a brief rest during a lull in the fighting. Above, ruined houses in a Dunkirk street. Below, smoke rising from houses on the outskirts of Dunkirk. In the foreground is one of the trenches occupied by the B.E.F.

Photos, "News Chronicle"





during the week-end the following statement was made:

"The Supreme War Council carried out a general survey of the situation and reached full agreement regarding all the measures which that situation called for.

"The meeting of the Supreme War Council gave full proof that the Allied Governments and peoples are more than ever implacably resolved to pursue in the closest possible concord the present struggle until complete victory is achieved."

Along the front of the Somme and the Aisne there was little activity on June 2; near Rethel, where an enemy raid had been made five days previously, there was some shelling and "a few shots from automatic arms." Reynaud and Pétain visited a sector of the Somme front and seemed well satisfied with what was being done by the French High Command. A French communiqué issued late on the 3rd said that the enemy was bringing up reinforcements on the right bank of the Aisne and making close contact with the French positions to the west of the Saar. The Germans were active in patrol work unreadiness of the German Command at this stage as to the enterprise of the French. The time for the massed enemy assault was evidently not yet ripe. The line at this date ran along the Somme from the Estuary to the point where the Crozat Canal left the river of St. Simon, south-west of St. Quentin, with a few French bridge-heads on the right bank and one German bridge-head in the Amiens area on the left bank. The line then followed the Crozat Canal to the Oise, the Oise to the junction of the Aisne-Oise Canal.

The River Line





CAPTURED NAZIS AND DOOMED SPY

Top left, a very young German soldier captured during the fighting in the Low Countries. Above, German prisoners taken by the French having a meal in a French prisoner-of-war camp. Left, a Belgian woman, convicted of spying in the Dunkirk region, is being taken from one of the Dunkirk forts, where she has been interrogated, by French marines.

Photos, Section de l'Armée; Sport & General; Associated Press

and air reconnaissance during June 4, and also made sporadic local attacks, apparently with the object of testing the Somme and Aisne defences. Enemy artillery fire with the same object was reported. In fighting on the Lower Somme the French took some prisoners, but it was clear that any such successes were to be attributed as much to and the Aisne to near Rethel. Thence it crossed the upper Argonne to the Meuse, near its junction with the Chiers. A little farther on began the still intact Maginot Line.

British troops, including some of the finest soldiers in the Army, were holding a section of the Somme front, though only a small part in comparison with that manned by their French brothers in arms. Their spirit was superb, and they were only too eager to play their part in stemming the German advance.

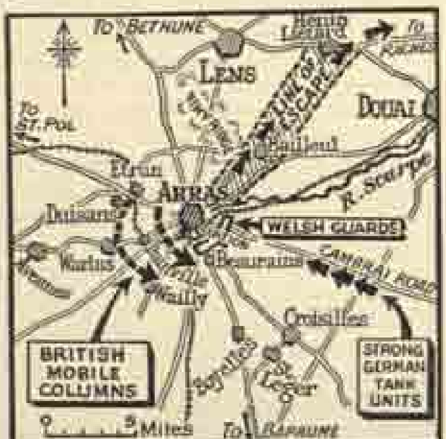
At dawn on June 5 there began the enemy offensive, which was destined to have such a grave and far-reaching effect on the course of the war—ranging along the Somme and the Aisne on a front extending from the Channel to the Laon-Soissons road. It is described in Chapter 91.

THE BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE IN FLANDERS: STORIES OF THE BATTLE

General Petre's Defence of Arras—An Offensive by the Durhams and a Tank Brigade—Enemy Attempts to Cross the Scarpe—Gort Orders a General Withdrawal—Petre's Force is Got Away—Adventures of a Tank Battalion—Royal Artillery at Wytschaete—Saving the Guns

(See also Chapter 143, on Lord Gort's Despatches)

For generations to come men will speak with pride and admiration of the great deeds of the British Expeditionary Force in its campaign in Flanders in the early summer months of 1940. We who live so near to the actual event know at once both more and less than will be the case with them; we have accounts of heroic stands, of gallant actions here and there, on this day and on that; not yet, however, have we the material out of which to create a narrative which shall be not only filled with the interest that always attaches to the telling of great deeds well done, but also complete in its detail and its all-embracing scope. Here, in this chapter, then, we take several tales of battle and tell them as they were told by men who had their part in them to Mr. Douglas Williams, War Correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph."



This map shows the British line of retreat from Arras when the enemy's superiority in numbers made withdrawal imperative.
By courtesy of "The Daily Telegraph"

On the same day (May 18) that the Grenadiers were attacked on the Dendre, the enemy delivered a violent assault on the Allied line some miles to the south in the neighbourhood of St. Quentin, and so menacing did the situation become, particularly in view of the infiltration by Nazi tanks, that it became necessary to order the abandonment of Arras, the town which, up to only a few days before, had been Lord Gort's headquarters. Here, then, our first story has its commencement.

The defence of the city and the surrounding area was entrusted by Lord Gort, who was still in Belgium with advanced G.H.Q., to Gen. Petre, summoned from his 12th Division headquarters at Abbeville, who later came under the orders of General Franklyn as G.O.C. of the area, with headquarters at Vimy.

Available troops, necessarily scanty, were disposed to the best advantage to meet the Germans. The 36th Infantry Brigade (commanded by Brigadier Roupell, V.C.), which was subsequently overrun by the Germans, was posted round Doullens to guard the back areas, with one battalion (Royal West Kents) detached to guard the Somme crossings at Péronne. Two brigades of the 23rd Division (Territorials) were strung along the Canal du Nord to face the enemy coming through the twenty-mile gap he had made in that area.

For the defence of the city itself were available one battalion of Welsh Guards, some mixed units of G.H.Q. troops, such as construction companies, supply details, and the like, and a somewhat battered French armoured division. Except for the Welsh Guards, the British troops, whose duties up to that time had been largely civilian, were necessarily ill-trained and ill-equipped to meet the formidable enemy. There was little or no artillery available, although later a battery of 25-pounders was lent by the 5th Division and a two-pounder anti-tank battery came from the 50th Division.

General Petre established his headquarters in the ancient pile of the Palais St. Vaast, whose underground cellars furnished perfect protection against air raids. Two officers were lent to him as Staff Officers, but he had no clerks and no communications but a few gallant dispatch riders (plus a wireless set which worked intermittently) and one cipher officer. He was almost completely cut off from G.H.Q., except for the rare arrival of a liaison officer after a perilous trip over heavily shelled roads; he fully realized that the enemy was determined, at all costs, to capture Arras—a key city in the communications of Northern France.

Ammunition was plentiful, and there were stocks of food, including one of the N.A.A.F.I. depots, the stores of which, distributed gratis, were much enjoyed.

By this time the population of the city had dwindled to a mere 3,000, all of whom had sought refuge in civil A.R.P. shelters or in the famous caves, formed by the excavation through centuries of local building stone, from the enemy. The streets were deserted, houses and shops shuttered.

A Deserted City

The defending troops were posted along the southern and eastern perimeter of the city in hastily constructed strong points and machine-gun posts. From May 20 heavy fighting developed, with frequent raids by dive bombers, which caused some casualties and made communications difficult. Welcome reinforcements arrived in the shape of the Green Howards and the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, but enemy pressure



HE DEFENDED ARRAS

General R. L. Petre, commanding the 12th Division of the B.E.F., was entrusted with the defence of Arras. His troops held the city for some time in face of greatly superior enemy forces. (See also photograph, p. 1533.)
Photo, Lafayette



BRITISH H.Q. AT ARRAS

The Palais Saint Vaast at Arras was the headquarters of Maj.-Gen. Petre during severe fighting around the town. This building was almost completely destroyed during the war of 1914-18 and afterwards rebuilt.
Photo, E.N.A.

was such that General Petre decided that he could not continue to hold the outskirts of the town on the south, and a withdrawal was ordered to the line of the railway station.

The bridge over the cutting was blown up, and the cutting itself, six or seven railway lines broad at that point, was converted into an impenetrable tank obstacle by piling railway trains together four or five deep. Engines with open throttles were allowed to smash into each other until the whole area was a solid mass of jumbled carriages and smashed rolling-stock, behind which, and from the windows of houses on the main square facing the station, the British garrison took up its new defensive position.

Heavy incendiary bombing was carried out by the enemy that afternoon. It started many fires, which, owing to lack of wind, continued to smoulder, covering the whole city with a pall of black smoke. By May 22 the pressure round the town had become intense, and Lord Gort, through General Franklyn, decided that some kind of offensive was essential.

The purpose of the attack was twofold. First, G.H.Q. was very anxious to make some cooperative attempt southwards to join hands with the French, who were understood to be on the eve of launching their eagerly awaited counter-attack northwards. Secondly, it was hoped to relieve the Arras garrison.

The task was entrusted to General Martell, of the 50th Division, who was given for the purpose one of his own brigades, consisting of Durham Light Infantry and a tank brigade.

General Martell was instructed to clear an area about ten miles deep and four miles wide, west and south of Arras, by forming his forces into two small mobile columns which would advance along parallel lines a few miles apart. His troops had had little rest for several days, and, moreover, it was their first encounter with the Germans.

Each column consisted of one infantry battalion, one anti-tank battery, one battery 18-pounders, one company machine-guns, one tank battalion.

The operation went well in its initial stages. The left column did fine work, put many enemy tanks out of action, captured 400 prisoners and killed many Germans. The right column made some progress, but was held up by unexpectedly heavy enemy forces, and was also upset by the erratic behaviour of the French armoured division, which, while co-operating with our forces, mistook our troops for Germans and opened fire on them. Unfortunately also about this time both commanding officers of the tank battalion were killed, while the commander of one of the infantry battalions was also killed when the tank in which he was riding suffered a direct hit from a German field-gun.

Check to the Counter-Offensive

By 6 p.m. it became evident that further progress was impossible; from observation points reinforcements of enemy tanks, with infantry in buses, could be seen moving down the road from Cambrai. Some were destroyed by





ARRAS OLD AND NEW

The façade of the ancient Ostel des Poissonniers, in Arras, once the meeting-place of the Fishmongers' Corporation. It stood undamaged throughout the war of 1914-18. Above, is the *Rue Gambetta*, Arras, with the Hôtel du Commerce (rebuilt 1920), familiar to many soldiers of 1914-18.
Photos, G. MacCormack





THESE REGIMENTS DEFENDED ARRAS

Above, Green Howards in training. Above, right, a motor-cycle unit of the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers ready to start off on exercise. Below, men of the Royal West Kent Regiment in a forward area of the B.E.F. Below, right, Welsh Guardsmen with a two-inch mortar at a spot in France where their fathers fought in the war of 1914-18. All these regiments were represented in the defence of Arras in May, 1940.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright





direct fire, but the pressure became greater and greater, and heavy counter-attacks were launched on the anti-tank localities which the two columns had established at Beaurains and Warlus.

The enemy also began a series of desperate attempts to cross the River Scarpe. A bridging train was destroyed by our artillery, but the German infantry continued to press forward in waves to launch their assault boats. Our Bren guns could not fire fast enough to cope with the packed masses of Germans, who dashed forward frantically, suffering tremendous losses.

In view of the enemy's obvious superiority in strength, both columns began to withdraw north of the city, where General Petre's force had already realized that they could not hold out much longer. With much of the city burning, the streets harassed hourly by dive-bombing and with continual alarms at points all round the perimeter, defence was becoming more and more difficult. German forces, some of them appearing in various disguises, had already reached the area of the Citadel, and preparations were discussed for a last stand at the Palais.

Finally, at 1.30 on the morning of May 24, a dishevelled and exhausted liaison officer arrived at General Petre's headquarters, after a five-hour motor trip, with orders from Lord Gort for a general withdrawal. Only two hours remained before daybreak, but the evacuation took place in perfect order. It was started down the Douai road,

but just outside Arras it was found that the bridge over the Scarpe had been prematurely blown up. It was at first considered a misfortune, but later turned out to be a blessing in disguise, for a scouting party of some twenty which had crossed the broken span were captured by a large party of Germans a short way down the road. The remaining columns were then switched to the Hénin-Liétard road, which at that time was the only free exit from the city, the Germans having occupied at least 330 deg. of the perimeter.

All that morning General Petre's force, together with remnants of the 5th and 50th Divisions, moved in a packed mass, nose to tail, down the narrow road; but not a single German 'plane was in the air, and the whole force reached comparative safety north of Douai without interference or casualties.

Further details of the fighting on May 21 are forthcoming in the shape of an account of the fortunes of one of the two tank battalions placed at General Martel's disposal. This battalion had gone into Belgium on May 12, but after a few days had been ordered back to Orchies, in the old Gort Line, and thence to Vimy, where it was placed under the orders of the 50th Division.

It arrived in the Bois de la Folie, near Vimy, shortly after dawn on May 21, and while the men snatched a bite of breakfast and a brief rest, the officers hurried to a house in Petit Vimy to receive the operation orders.

The counter-attack was to take place that same afternoon, and the battalion was given a start line along a railway track south-west of Arras. Despite the fact that the battalion had moved 300 miles in less than ten days, with practically no opportunity for the maintenance and repair of vehicles, 38 Mark I tanks (weighing about 10 tons each, with a crew of two, and armed with Vickers machine-guns) were available, plus seven Mark II tanks (weighing 25 tons, carrying a crew of four, and armed with the two-pounder anti-tank gun) borrowed from another unit.



LED COUNTER-OFFENSIVE

Brigadier Giffard Le Quesne Martel, D.S.O., M.C. (above), who prior to the war had been Deputy Director of Mechanization at the War Office, and afterwards commanded the 50th Division of the B.E.F., was in charge of the British counter-attack at Arras on May 23, 1940. (See p. 1543.)

Photo, Lafayette



GERMAN BOATS FOR RIVER TRANSPORT

In the actions around Arras on May 23, 1940, the Germans made extensive use of rubber boats in their efforts to cross the River Scarpe. Above, Nazis are seen paddling a similar boat across a Belgian river after their successful invasion of Belgium.

Photo, Associated Press

Tanks in Counter-Attack

Sharp at 11 a.m. all moved off in proper order towards the start line, while the commanding officer and the adjutant went forward in light tanks to make contact with the battalion of Durham Light Infantry which they were instructed to support. On arrival, however, at Anzin St. Aubin, where the rendezvous had been given, they found that the infantry had not arrived, and they did not, in fact, put in an appearance until an hour later, having been delayed en route.

The attack, however, began promptly at 2 p.m., and as the tanks rolled forward they came into immediate contact with the enemy in strong force. The crossing of the railway was made difficult by the fact that it was here running through a cutting and could be crossed only at a few places, and, in the hope of clearing out enemy forces which were holding them up, the seven large tanks were ordered forward to deal with them. They were not seen again.

Shortly afterwards the remainder of the tank force came under heavy fire from anti-tank guns, but they had no trouble in silencing the enemy as soon as the latter's positions were given away by the flash of the first discharge. The German crews packed up and





WHERE TANK MET TANK

Heavy engagements between British and German tank brigades took place at Beaurains (right), a southern suburb of Arras, during a counter-attack by Gen. Martell's forces on May 23, 1940. Above, a British crew running to man their tank. At the foot of the page is a map of Arras and its environs, showing the line of advance of Gen. Martell's troops.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; G. MacCormack; Map by courtesy of "The Daily Telegraph"

moved off in a hurry at the first burst of our machine-gun fire.

The enemy infantry showed no great courage. On many occasions parties of them came running towards the British tanks, undoing their ammunition and revolver belts as they did so, and handing these in through the flaps to the British crews inside.

In other cases, so terrified were the Germans that in their eagerness to surrender they even climbed on top of the tanks and perched there with their hands in the air. Others lay down, shamming dead, and one tank, investigating a gravel pit, found no fewer than fifty Germans lying huddled together, hoping they would be passed over as dead, though in this they were disillusioned.

By this time the battle had spread out over a large area and had developed into individual fighting by individual tanks. A number of our tanks had had to be discarded owing to mechanical breakdowns, and the wireless communication sets on those still engaged were out of action or could not be used, as there had been no time to tune in all the sets on the same frequency.



We were inflicting heavy losses, and matters were progressing very favourably until the commanding officer, still directing the battle from his light tank, was killed by a direct hit from a German field battery at point-blank range as he stood up in the control tower.

There were still about a dozen tanks in this area. These were collected together by the senior officer present, and he led them to contact the Durham Light Infantry, who were now observed advancing across country in "open order" with their rifles at the "ready" and with Germans emerging from the crops around them with their hands up surrendering.

Farther on, the British tanks suddenly came upon a collection of German vehicles, including two enormous six-wheeled petrol containers. They opened immediate fire and destroyed the lot, including petrol tanks holding thousands of gallons.

By this time contact with the infantry had again been lost, and it later appeared that the D.L.I. had suffered heavy losses from a German dive-bombing attack which had forced the men to disperse into cover.

All the afternoon fighting continued, until, towards the evening, the tanks rallied behind the infantry, which were found again holding a position at Beaurains. Operations were confused, and neither side had any clear information where the other was.

At about nine o'clock, when the tank adjutant was holding a conference at a crossroad with the Acting Commanding Officer of the D.L.I. (the C.O. having become a casualty), they heard a rumble of tanks approaching. It was dark by this time, with a heavy pall of smoke covering the countryside. The Durham officer insisted that the tanks were German; the adjutant was equally positive that they were British.

Finally, the adjutant decided to walk forward and find out for himself, and as he met the leading tank he tapped on the visor with a couple of maps he held in his hand. The tank stopped, and to his horror a couple of German heads popped out of the flaps! He turned and ran like a hare 300 yards down the road, with the Germans shooting at him with all they had.

The burst of fire had warned the British tanks of the enemy's proximity, and a heavy pitched battle ensued at less than 300 yards' range between the ten small British tanks and five big German ones.

Ten Tanks Against Five

For ten minutes violent fighting continued at this point-blank range, with tanks on each side shooting at gun flashes from the other side. Finally, the British tanks dropped a smoke candle, which caused a lull for a couple of minutes, and then fighting was resumed with greater intensity.

Luckily for the British, because by this time ammunition was running low, the Germans decided that they had had enough, and lumbered away into the darkness.

By this time it was 10 o'clock, and in the absence of definite orders the tank commanders were instructed to withdraw, and started their way back to Vimy. They returned across country, passing a wood full of burning German vehicles, and after crossing the River Scarpe at Anzin they reached their encampment in the Bois de la Folie just as dawn was breaking.

Next we have the story of an artillery engagement. It concerns a regiment of the Royal Artillery which, on Sunday May 26, received orders to proceed to Wytschaete—"White Sheet" to soldiers of 1914–1918—in Belgium. The regiment had hardly returned to its billets at La Marquette, and a portion of the gun troops had not yet returned from Pont-à-Marc. It was decided, however, to send all the regimental headquarter groups to a rendezvous in the woods on the other side of the village.

The second-in-command went on ahead to reconnoitre suitable "hides" and the best route in for the guns. Although the column was continually held up by refugees, the regiment was safely hidden and the reconnaissance carried out.

The R.A. at Wytschaete

Throughout the deployment enemy bombers were active. The second-in-command's rendezvous and regimental headquarters "hide" were bombed but suffered no casualties.

The infantry at this time were holding a line along the Ypres-Comines Canal, thence along the railway line north of the canal to a point where the railway crossed the canal, and so on to Ypres itself. The patrols for their part were well forward, the idea being to withdraw to the canal line as soon as contact had been made with the enemy. This was carried out according to plan.

After one quiet day things began to liven up. The enemy attacked in force, and the artillery regiment fired continually on troop concentrations and trench-mortars. Attempts were also made to locate a battery which had proved most troublesome to our infantry. The situation gradually deteriorated. Observation-post lines were cut and wireless communications jammed. At one time it seemed that the lines on both flanks had gone, but the infantry brigadier went round all his battalions and the line was again stabilized. Many of the infantry who had fallen back on the gun positions re-formed and went forward. Odd rifles abandoned by wounded men were collected at the gun positions for future use.

The problem of communication remained. It was decided to send one officer from each battery forward into the line to establish contact with the forward company headquarters and direct fire. One officer went forward in the regiment's sole remaining armoured observation vehicle, the other on foot. At one time the latter officer was actually several hundred yards in front of the infantry. The reports received from him were invaluable in clarifying the situation.

The officer in the armoured vehicle succeeded in going about a mile before a shell burst overhead and wounded his assistant. He proceeded on foot a mile and a half, finally reaching a drive leading up to a château. Here he found a company of Royal Scots Fusiliers practically surrounded, and so, under heavy fire from three sides, he made his way back with the intention of calling for battery fire. But it seemed certain that the company of Royal Scots Fusiliers could not escape being surrounded, and in fact very few of these men did get back. Nevertheless, all possible support was given to them, but the difficulty of maintaining communication made observed fire almost impossible, and it remained for regimental headquarters, battery command posts, and troop command posts to use their own initiative in deciding targets.

Enemy shelling, which had been continuous all the day, increased after nightfall, and it became obvious that a further attack was pending. The situation as regards our own infantry remained obscure. The commanding officer gave orders to troop commanders to order individual gun control at their own discretion.

A troop near Saint Eloi supporting the left flank was able, through telephonic communication with the Northamptons and a Manchesters' machine-gun company, to prevent a break-through on the left of the line. An officer of this troop, having spent a day at the observation post, knew the area well, and under his direction a line was laid out to the Northamptons and Manchesters, who were then able to call for fire whenever it was needed. On more than one occasion battery fire was put down.

In the small hours the guns were firing over open sights, and all spare personnel were armed with rifles and Bren guns to give every possible help to the infantry. The enemy advanced again and again to within a few hundred yards of our positions, but each time he was driven back by the artillery's guns at point-blank range and by small-arms fire. At three in the morning things quietened down, though there was intermittent machine-gun and shell fire, and an hour later orders were received to occupy positions near Kemmel.

The Germans attacked again at 4.30 a.m. All troops except the most advanced were safely withdrawn. The most advanced troop, however, owing to the boggy state of the ground, were compelled to winch their guns out, one by one—a two-hour task.

Saving the Guns

Two guns had been removed and were on the road, and the other two were being winched out, when suddenly the enemy appeared over the ridge. The troop commander ordered that the two remaining guns should be rendered useless, and the first two guns were immediately sent off to the rear under heavy fire. The sergeant detailed to remove the firing-pins of the guns was severely wounded, but was rescued after a counter-attack by the infantry.

The counter-attack began at midday, when reinforcements arrived in the form of an infantry brigade. They deployed in front of the gun positions where the line had for a time been stabilized. They counter-attacked and the line was restored. Many times during the anxious hours at Wytschaete the line looked like going. The infantry was heavily outnumbered and continually subjected to machine-gun fire, trench-mortar fire and dive-bombing. All ranks had been many days and nights without sleep, yet when the order to withdraw was given, many a man was at a loss to understand the reason for it.







WYTSCHAETE AGAIN THE SCENE OF BRITISH ACTION

In this page are seen men of British regiments which in May, 1940, took part in the engagements around Wytschaete (top). Left, men of the Manchester Regiment with machine-guns during Divisional exercises in France. Right, Bren gunners of the Royal Scots Fusiliers. Below, a gun of the Royal Artillery being moved by armoured tractor up the line. The map shows the line of withdrawal upon Kemmel of the British troops in action between Wytschaete and Ypres.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; A. J. Insall, Copyright A.P.; Map specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Felix Gardon*





Historic Documents. CXXII

'THE MIRACLE OF DELIVERANCE'

We make no apology for reproducing almost the whole of Mr. Churchill's moving statement in the House of Commons on June 4, 1940, when he revealed in full the history, tragic but sublime, of the withdrawal of the British Expeditionary Force to Dunkirk and its subsequent evacuation in the teeth of enemy opposition.

From the moment that the French defences at Sedan and on the Meuse were broken at the end of the second week of May only a rapid retreat to Amiens and the south could have saved the British and French armies who had entered Belgium at the appeal of the Belgian King. However, this strategic fact was not immediately realized. The French High Command hoped they would be able to close the gap, and the armies of the north were under their orders. Moreover, a retirement of this kind would have involved almost certainly the destruction of the fine Belgian Army of over 20 divisions and the abandonment of the whole of Belgium.

Therefore, when the force and scope of the German penetration was realized and when the new French Generalissimo, Gen. Weygand, assumed command in place of Gen. Gamelin, an effort was made by the French and British armies in Belgium to occupy and hold the right hand of the Belgians and to give their own right hand to a newly-created French army, which was to have advanced across the Somme in great strength.

However, the German eruption swept like a sharp scythe stroke around the right and rear of the armies of the North. A force of eight or nine armoured divisions, each of about 400 armoured vehicles of different kinds carefully assorted to be complementary and divisible into self-contained units, cut off all communications between us and the main French armies. It severed our own communications for food and ammunition, which ran first to Amiens and afterwards through Abbeville, and it sheared its way up the coast to Boulogne and Calais, and almost to Dunkirk.

Behind this armoured and mechanized onslaught came a number of German divisions in lorries, and behind them again there plodded, comparatively slowly, the dull brute mass of the ordinary German Army and German people always so ready to trample down in other lands the liberties and comforts they have never known in their own.

I have said that this vast armoured scythe stroke almost reached Dunkirk. Boulogne and Calais were the centres of desperate fighting. The Guards defended Boulogne for a while and were then withdrawn by orders from this country.

Glorious Defence of Calais

The Rifle Brigade, the 60th Rifles and the Queen Victoria's Rifles, with a battalion of British tanks and 1,000 Frenchmen—in all about 4,000 strong—defended Calais to the last. The British Brigadier was given an hour to surrender. He spurned the offer, and four days of intense street fighting passed before a silence reigned over Calais which marked the end of a memorable resistance. Only 30 unwounded survivors were brought off by the Navy, and we do not know the fate of their comrades. Their sacrifice was not, however, in vain. At least two armoured divisions, which otherwise would have been turned against the British Expeditionary Force, had to be sent there to overcome them. They added another page to the glories of the Light Division, and the time gained enabled the Gravelines waterline to be flooded and held by the French troops, and thus it was that the port of Dunkirk was kept open.

When it was found impossible for the armies of the north to re-open their communications through Amiens for the main French armies, only one choice remained. It seemed, indeed, forlorn.

The Belgian, British and French armies were almost surrounded; their sole line of retreat was a single port and its neighbouring beaches. They were pressed on every side by heavy attacks and far outnumbered in the air. . . .

Another blow, which might have proved fatal, was to fall. The King of the Belgians had called upon us to come to his aid. Had not this ruler and his Government severed themselves from the Allies who rescued their country from extinction in the last war, had they not sought refuge in what proved a fatal neutrality, the British and French armies might well at the very outset have saved not only Belgium, but perhaps even Poland. Yet at the last moment, when Belgium was already invaded, the King of the Belgians called upon us to come to his aid, and even at the last moment we came. He and his brave and efficient Belgian army, nearly half a million strong, guarded our eastern flank, and thus kept open our only line of retreat to the sea.

Suddenly, without any prior consultation, with the least possible notice, without the advice of his Ministers, and upon his own personal act, he sent a plenipotentiary to the German Command, surrendered his Army, and exposed our flank and means of retreat. . . .

Armies' Struggle to Reach Dunkirk

The surrender of the Belgian Army compelled the British at the shortest notice to cover the flank to the sea of more than 30 miles in length, otherwise it would have shared the fate to which King Leopold had condemned the finest army his country had ever formed. One has only to look at the map to realize that contact was lost inevitably between the British and two out of three corps forming the French Army who were still much farther from the coast than we were, and how it seemed impossible that any large number of Allied troops could reach the coast.

The enemy attacked in great strength on all sides, and their main power—the power of their far more numerous air force—was thrown into the battle or concentrated upon Dunkirk and the beaches.

Pressing in on the narrow exit, both from the east and west, the enemy began to fire with cannon along the beaches by which alone shipping could approach or depart. They sowed magnetic mines in the channels and the seas; they sent repeated waves of hostile aircraft, sometimes more than 100 strong in one formation, to cast their bombs upon the single pier that remained and on the sand dunes amid which the troops as they arrived took shelter. Their U-boats, one of which was sunk, and their motor launches, took their toll of the vast traffic that now began.

For four or five days an intense struggle raged. Their armoured divisions, or what was left of them, together with great masses of German artillery and infantry, hurled themselves in vain upon the ever-narrowing and contracting appendix upon which the French and British armies fought.

Meanwhile, the Royal Navy, with the willing help of countless merchant seamen and a host of volunteers, strained every nerve to embark the British and Allied troops. Over 220 light warships and more than 650 other vessels were engaged. They had to operate upon a difficult coast, and often under adverse weather conditions and under an almost ceaseless hail of bombs and increasing concentrations of artillery fire. Nor were the seas themselves free from mines or torpedoes.

Courage and Devotion of Rescuers

It was in conditions such as these that our men carried on with little or no rest for days and nights, making trip after trip across the dangerous waters. The numbers they have brought back are the measure of their devotion and courage.

Meanwhile, the R.A.F., which had already been intervening in the battle so far as its range would allow, now used part of its main Metropolitan fighter strength to strike at the German bombers and at the fighters which in large numbers protected them. This struggle was protracted and fierce.

But now suddenly the scene is clear. The crash of the thunder has for the moment—but only for the moment—died away. The miracle of deliverance, achieved by valour, by perseverance, by perfect discipline, by faultless service, by resource, by skill, by unconquerable fidelity, is manifest to us all.

DRAMATIC STORY OF THE GREAT RETREAT

The enemy was hurled back by the retreating British and French troops. He was so roughly handled that he did not dare molest the departing armies. The Air Force decisively defeated the main strength of the German Air Force and inflicted upon them a loss of at least four to one. The Navy, using nearly 1,000 ships of all kinds, took over 335,000 men, French and British, out of the jaws of death and shame back to their native land and to the tasks which lie immediately before them.

R.A.F. Win a Decisive Victory

We must be careful not to assign to this deliverance the attributes of a victory. Wars are not won by evacuations. But there was a victory inside this deliverance which should be noted. It was gained by the Air Force.

Many of our soldiers coming back have not seen the Air Force at work. They only saw the German bombers which escaped their protective attack. They underrate the achievements of the British Air Force. This was a great trial of strength between the British and the German air forces. Can you conceive a greater object for the power of Germany in the air than to make evacuation from these beaches impossible and to sink all the ships which were displayed, almost to the number of a thousand, in the waters outside? Could there have been an objective of greater military importance or of greater significance for the whole purpose of war than this?

They tried hard, and they were beaten back. They were frustrated in their attack. We got the Army away, and they have paid fourfold for any loss they have inflicted. Every day formations of German aeroplanes—and we know this is a very brave race—have turned on several occasions from an attack of one-fourth of their number of the Royal Air Force and dispersed in different directions. Twelve aeroplanes have been hunted by two. One aeroplane was driven into the water and cast away by the mere charge of a British aeroplane which had no more ammunition. All our types and all our pilots have been vindicated. The Hurricane, Spitfire and the new Defiant all have been vindicated as superior to what they have to face.

When we consider how much greater would be our advantages in defending the air above this island against an overseas attack, I must say that I find those facts a sure basis upon which practical and reassuring thoughts may rest. . . .

May it not also be that the cause of civilization itself will be defended by the skill and vision of a few thousand airmen? There never has been, I suppose, in all the history of the world, such an opportunity for youth. The Knights of the Round Table, the Crusaders—they all fall back into the prosaic days, not only distant but prosaic, to these young men going forth every morning to guard their native land and all we stand for—those men going forward, in their hands the instruments of colossal and shattering power, of whom it can be said: "Every morn brought forth a noble chance and every chance brought forth a noble deed."

British Losses of Equipment

I return to the Army. In the long series of very fierce battles, now on this front and now on that, fighting on three fronts at once, battles fought by two or three divisions against an equal or somewhat larger number of the enemy and fought very fiercely on the old ground so many of us knew so well—in these battles our losses in men have exceeded 30,000 killed, wounded and missing. . . .

We have lost nearly 1,000 guns, all the transport, and all the armoured vehicles that were with the Army in the north. This loss will impose a further delay on the expansion of our military strength. . . . How long it will last depends on the exertions which we make in this island. An effort the like of which has never been seen in our records is now being made. Work is proceeding everywhere night and day, Sundays and weekdays. Capital and labour have cast aside their interests, rights, and customs to put them into the common stock. Already the flow of munitions has leaped forward. There is no reason why we should not, in a few months, overtake the sudden and serious loss that has come upon us without retarding the development of our general programme. Nevertheless, our thankfulness at the escape of our Army, and of many men whose loved ones have passed through an agonizing week, must not blind us to the fact that what has happened in France and Belgium is a colossal military disaster. The French Army has been weakened. The Belgian Army has been lost. A large part of those fortified lines on which so much faith had been reposed has gone. Many valuable mining districts and factories have passed into the enemy's possession. The whole of the Channel ports are in his hands, with all the strategic consequences that follow from that. We must expect another blow to be struck almost immediately at us or the French. We are told that Herr Hitler has a plan for invading the British Isles. This has often been thought of before. When Napoleon lay at Boulogne for a year with his flat-bottomed boats and his Grand Army, he was told by someone: "There are bitter weeds in England."

There are certainly a good number more of them since the B.E.F. returned. The whole question of home defence against invasion is, of course, powerfully affected by the fact that we have for the time being in this island incomparably more powerful military forces than we have ever had.

But this will not continue. We shall not be content with a defensive war. We have our duty to our Allies. We have to reconstitute and build up the B.E.F. once again under its gallant Commander-in-Chief, Lord Gort.

All this is in train. But in the interval we must put our defences in this island into such a high state of organization that fewest possible numbers will be required to give effective security, and that the largest possible potential of offensive effort may be realized. On this we are now engaged. . . .

Chances For and Against Invasion

There has never been a period in all those long centuries in which an absolute guarantee against invasion, still less against serious raids, could have been given to our people. In the days of Napoleon the same wind that would have carried his transports across the Channel might have driven away the blockading fleet.

There was always a chance, and it is that chance which has excited and befooled the imaginations of many Continental tyrants. We are assured that novel methods will be adopted, and when we see the originality of malice and the ingenuity of aggression which our enemy displays we may certainly prepare ourselves for every kind of novel stratagem and every kind of brutal and treacherous manœuvre. I think no idea is so outlandish that it should not be considered and viewed with a searching but I hope also with a steady eye. One must never forget the solid assurance of sea power and those which belong to air power if it can be locally exercised.

I have myself full confidence that if all do their duty and nothing is neglected and if the best arrangements are made, as they are being made, we shall prove ourselves once again able to defend our island home, ride out the storms of war, and outlive the menace of tyranny if necessary for years, if necessary alone. At any rate, that is what we are trying to do. That is the resolve of the Government, every man of them. It is the will of Parliament and of the nation.

The British Empire with the French Republic, linked together in their cause and in their need, will defend to the death their native soil, aiding each other like good comrades to the utmost of their strength, even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule.

'We Shall Never Surrender'

We cannot flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air. We shall defend our island whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing-grounds, in the fields, in the streets, and in the hills.

We shall never surrender, and even if, which I do not for a moment believe, this island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet, will carry on the struggle until in God's good time the New World, with all its power and might, sets forth to the liberation and rescue of the Old.

Historic Documents. CXXIII–CXXV

'NO BRAVER EPIC IN ALL OUR ANNALS!'

The first official information of the evacuation from Dunkirk was given in a dramatic broadcast by Mr. Anthony Eden, War Minister, on June 2, 1940. We give below the bulk of his speech, and also two tributes, made by King George and the Admiralty, to the courage, devotion and resource of the Services which made this evacuation possible.

MR. ANTHONY EDEN, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR, IN A BROADCAST TALK, JUNE 2, 1940:

In the Battle of the Ports which has been raging for the past three weeks, Germany has made great strategical gains. The loss to us in equipment and in material has been heavy, but there is now another side to this picture.

The bulk of the B.E.F. has been saved, and, quite apart from what the French have done for their own forces, we have been able to bring tens of thousands of our French Allies off with our own men from Dunkirk. Nor is the effort ended. Four days ago not one of us would have dared to hope that the isolated Allied Armies could have fought their way through the bottle-neck to the coast.

It is the spirit of the B.E.F. that has won through. These men have marched hundreds of miles; they have fought countless actions with an enemy that hemmed them in and pressed upon them from three sides. The German High Command proudly announced that they were surrounded. They have fought their way out. How have they achieved the seemingly impossible?

Man for man the British troops have proved themselves superior to the Germans wherever they have met them. All accounts show that the B.E.F. took a toll of the enemy greatly in excess of that suffered by themselves. . . .

Let me now state the sequence of events. At the call of the King of the Belgians, the British Expeditionary Force advanced into Belgium and took up its position on the River Dyle. The advance lasted several days. Through events it could not control our Army had to come back in less than half that time. It did so with little confusion and with few losses. Seventy-five miles forward, a fight at the end of the advance, and seventy-five miles back, fighting all the way, all in the space of ten days.

That was the first phase of the Battle of the Ports and it was brilliantly executed. I have heard of one division which did not lose a single straggler on that 150-mile march. . . .

And so the B.E.F. found itself back on the Scheldt with its strength in men and material almost intact. But meanwhile the German mechanized columns were pouring through the gap to the south, advancing across our lines of communication, biting even deeper into our back areas. Desperate efforts were made to stem the tide. Units who had been sent to France to supply some of the much-needed labour behind the lines were thrown into the fight and acquitted themselves splendidly. Others were sent to hold the Channel ports in an effort to keep open communications with the British Expeditionary Force.

At Calais a small Allied force put up a magnificent resistance. In spite of repeated attacks by the enemy, and of continuous air and artillery bombardment, the garrison held out for several days. A summons to surrender was rejected by the British commander. His troops fought on. We now know, from certain information which we have received, that this gallant defence drew off powerful mechanized forces which must otherwise have been free to attack the flank of the British Expeditionary Force, at that time dangerously exposed.

While these events were taking place near our own shores, the Expeditionary Force was fighting for its life in its retreat on Dunkirk. Mechanized forces already encircled its western flank, and the collapse of the Belgian Army left open a wide gap between its eastern flank and the sea. There was no time to be lost. Divisions were moved rapidly to hold the flanks, and heavy fighting took place while the enemy tried desperately to cut off the Allied armies from the only base which was left to them. Some troops marched thirty-five miles in twenty-four hours.

The British brigades on the flanks stood firm, despite the enormously extended frontage they had now to defend. At one time the Expeditionary Force of nine divisions were holding a front of eighty miles. They held on and fought back.

On the west British troops defended the narrowing gap to the sea. Day after day the battle continued. At the end of it they had fought themselves to a standstill, but held their ground, and by doing so had enabled the remainder of the Expeditionary Force to get clear. On the east, corps artillery coming into action against the enemy massing for attack inflicted such heavy casualties that the attack never developed.

The stories of individual exploits at this time are legion. . . . But the triumph is not the triumph of individuals, however gallant. It is the triumph of an army. There is no braver epic in all our annals.

Here, then, is the story of the Battle of the Ports. From the moment of the collapse of the Belgian Army there was only one course left to the Allied Armies—to hold a line round Dunkirk, the only port that remained, and to embark as many men as possible before their rearguards were overwhelmed. Thanks to the magnificent and untiring co-operation of the Allied Navies and Air Forces we have been able to embark and save more than four-fifths of that B.E.F. which the Germans claimed were surrounded. . . . The British Expeditionary Force still exists, not as a handful of fugitives, but as a body of seasoned veterans. The vital weapon of any army is its spirit. Ours has been tried and tempered in the furnace. It has not been found wanting. It is this refusal to accept defeat that is the guarantee of final victory.

Our duty in this country is plain. We must make good our losses, and we must win the war. We need more planes, more tanks, more guns. The people of this country must work as never before. We must show the same qualities, the same discipline and the same self-sacrifice at home as the B.E.F. have shown in the field.

The nation honours with proud reverence those who fell that their comrades might win through. The innumerable actions, the countless deeds of the last week cannot all be recorded now. Each action will have its place in history. Soldiers, sailors, airmen who gave their lives to help—theirs is an immortal memory. Their spirit must be our banner; their sacrifice our spur.

KING GEORGE IN A MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER, JUNE 3, 1940:

I wish to express my admiration of the outstanding skill and bravery shown by the three Services and the Merchant Navy in the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Northern France. So difficult an operation was only made possible by brilliant leadership and the indomitable spirit among all ranks of the Force.

The measure of its success—greater than we had dared to hope—was due to the unfailing support of the Royal Air Force and, in the final stages, the tireless efforts of naval units of every kind.

While we acclaim this great feat, in which our French Allies, too, have played so important a part, we think with heartfelt sympathy of the loss and sufferings of those brave men whose self-sacrifice has turned disaster into triumph.

THE BOARD OF ADMIRALTY IN A SIGNAL SENT OUT JUNE 4:

The Board of Admiralty congratulate all concerned in the successful evacuation of the B.E.F. and the soldiers of the Allied armies from the Dunkirk area.

Their lordships appreciate the splendid endurance with which all ships and personnel faced the continuous attack of enemy aircraft and the physical strain imposed by long hours of arduous work in narrow waters over many days.

Their lordships also realize that success was only rendered possible by the great effort made by all shore establishments, and in particular by the Dover Command, who were responsible for the organization and direction of this difficult operation.

Chapter 89

HEROIC DEFENCE OF BOULOGNE & CALAIS DELAYS NAZI ONSLAUGHT ON THE B.E.F.

Menace to the Channel Ports—British Guards and Frenchmen Hold out in Boulogne—British Forces Withdrawn: A Naval Story—Grim Drama at Calais—London Territorials at Bay—No Surrender—Vice-Admiral Somerville's Tribute—The 60th Rifles and the Rifle Brigade—Silence Falls on Calais

(The full story of Calais Force is told in Chapter 150)

BEFORE details were published of the fierce fighting which involved the Channel ports, there were signs and portents: the Navy was unusually active; and certainly there had never been heard so many of our fighters and bombers passing overhead, to and fro, across the Channel. Many of them, in fact, were evacuating their bases in north-eastern France. Others were intensifying the offensive defensive bombing raids that were to hamper the enemy's designs against our retreating armies. The blitzkrieg launched on the Low Countries had flooded into northern France and, still north of the Somme, had swirled round to the Artois coast.

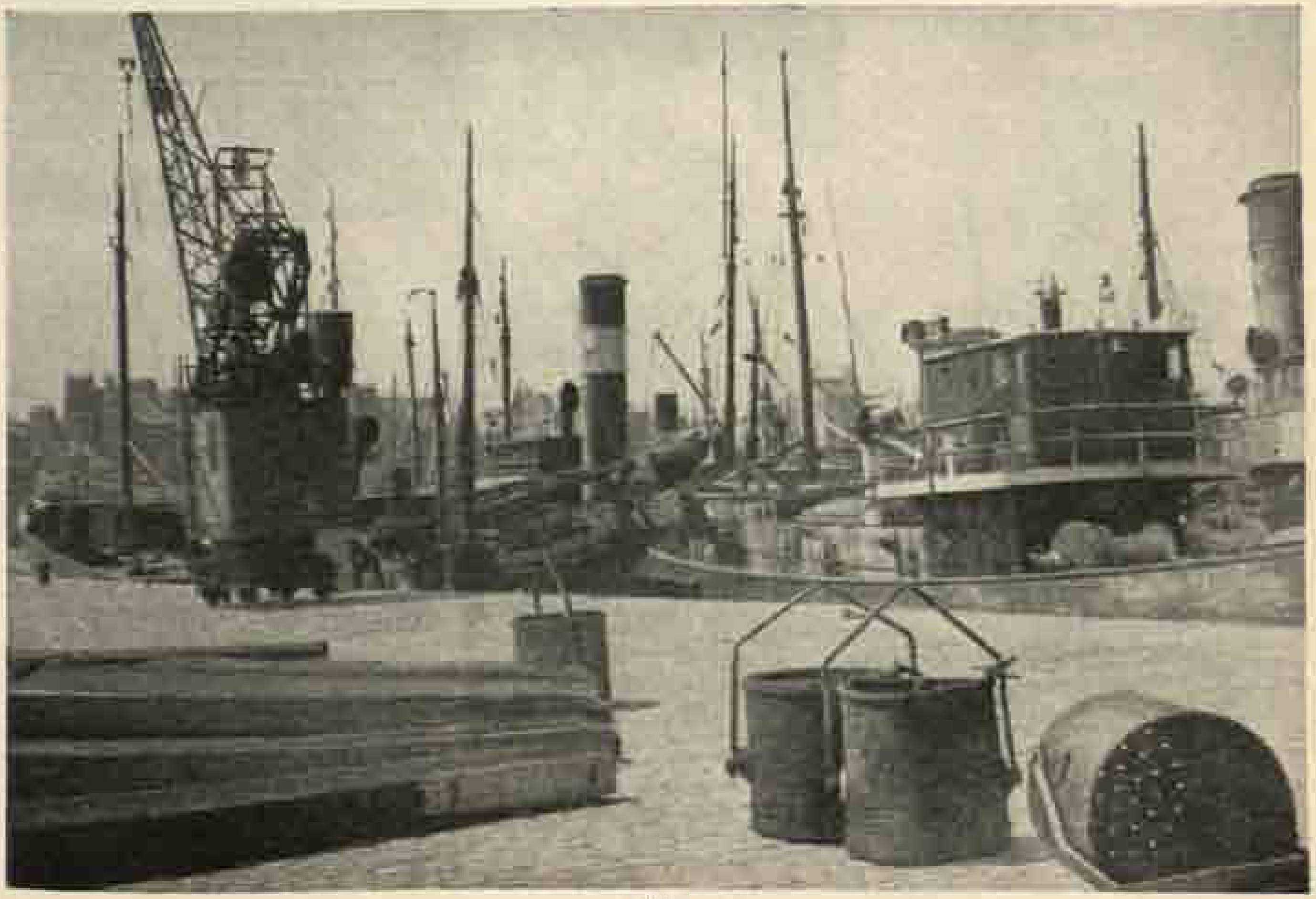
On May 24 the German forces had occupied Boulogne. A valiant stand by French rearguards had covered the evacuation on the previous day of the Guards, by direct orders from England, and in the old Citadel the Frenchmen fought on a day or two longer. But their final stand, supported by British and French naval units, was only to gain a little more time to add to that which the fierce, brief British resistance had just secured. It was seen that Boulogne had really gone. Watchers from the cliffs of England observed for several days the pall of smoke that hung above the blazing stores and buildings of the wrecked port. They felt, even when they could not hear, the unending vibrations of gunfire and of bomb explosions all along the French coast from Boulogne to Dunkirk, and at night the gloom over the sea was torn by streaks and flashes of light.

Vice-Admiral Bertram Home Ramsay, commander of the naval forces operating from Dover, has described how the British troops were got away from Boulogne on the night of May 23-24. When it was mooted that the B.E.F. might have to fall back on the Channel ports, the question of evacuation was

CAPTURED BY NAZIS: WRECKED BY R.A.F.

The British troops who made so gallant a stand at Boulogne were got away from the town on the night of May 23-24, 1940. But although the Germans captured the port, repeated raids by the R.A.F. made it well-nigh unusable. Below is a corner of the Bassin Chanzy at Boulogne, photographed shortly before the outbreak of war.

Photo, G. MacCormack





discussed, and it then did not seem too bad, as there were about five ports available. Vice-Admiral Ramsay went on:

"Our first job was to evacuate Boulogne, and this was done entirely by six destroyers. . . . They brought off 4,000 soldiers without any preparation, under fire from shore batteries, heavy aerial attacks, and machine-guns and snipers at every point. The captain in charge of the flotilla was sniped and shot on his bridge. That was the end of Boulogne."

A naval eye witness of the withdrawal said that the Germans were all round the docks at a distance of about 400 yards: snipers had crept to within fifty yards. Fire from field guns and machine-guns continued all the time, and bombing from the air went on ceaselessly. The daring and courage of the troops were magnificent under a tornado of fire. Another naval officer present said that the soldiers "stood like rocks."

While this grim drama was being enacted at Boulogne, other Allied forces were fighting for existence at the key port of Calais. On May 30 the War Office made the following announcement:

"Last week, a small British force was sent to hold Calais and to attempt to maintain communications with the B.E.F. Finding itself unable to carry out the latter task, in face of strong enemy mechanized forces, it concentrated on the defence of Calais.

"In spite of repeated attacks by the enemy and of continuous air and artillery bombardment, the garrison held out for several days. By its refusal to surrender it contained a large number of the enemy and was of invaluable assistance to the main body of the B.E.F. in its withdrawal on Dunkirk. This action will count among the most heroic deeds in the annals of the British Army."



Defenders of Calais

At Calais the British units of the Allied force were a battalion each of the Rifle Brigade, the Queen Victoria Rifles, the 60th Rifles, and the Royal Tank Regiment, together with a body of men from searchlight batteries of the Royal Artillery. Allied troops here were on the defensive, and from May 24 began to draw in their thinly-held lines around the town. Skilfully the withdrawal was made to inner lines and then to strong points well inside the town, the disciplined skill and valour of the Territorials equalling the finest records of the Regular Army. The fighting soon was street by street and house by house.

"They fought," said the German communiqué, "with courage and desperation. . . . In attacks by German infantry, firing came from every window. House by



WOMEN AND WOUNDED AT BOULOGNE

After an heroic stand at Boulogne the British troops there were withdrawn by direct orders from England. Top, women ambulance drivers boarding a British vessel at Boulogne; right, British wounded being taken from motor ambulances on the quay; below, stretcher cases being carried on to a hospital ship

From a War Office Official Film



ST. QUENTIN AGAIN SEES GERMAN TROOPS

Here, in May, 1940, Nazi motorized units are entering the French town of St. Quentin, on the Somme. St. Quentin had been the scene of heavy fighting during the German and Allied offensives of March and October, 1918, respectively. After the German occupation of the city in 1940 it was visited by Hitler.

Photo, Associated Press



BLITZKRIEG SEEN FROM THE GERMAN SIDE

The photographs in this page are taken from the German official army paper "Die Wehrmacht." The one above shows German troops advancing in open formation across the fields of Northern France. Below, a German motor-cycle column, its progress marked by clouds of dust, roars along the roads of France.

Photos, "Die Wehrmacht," Berlin





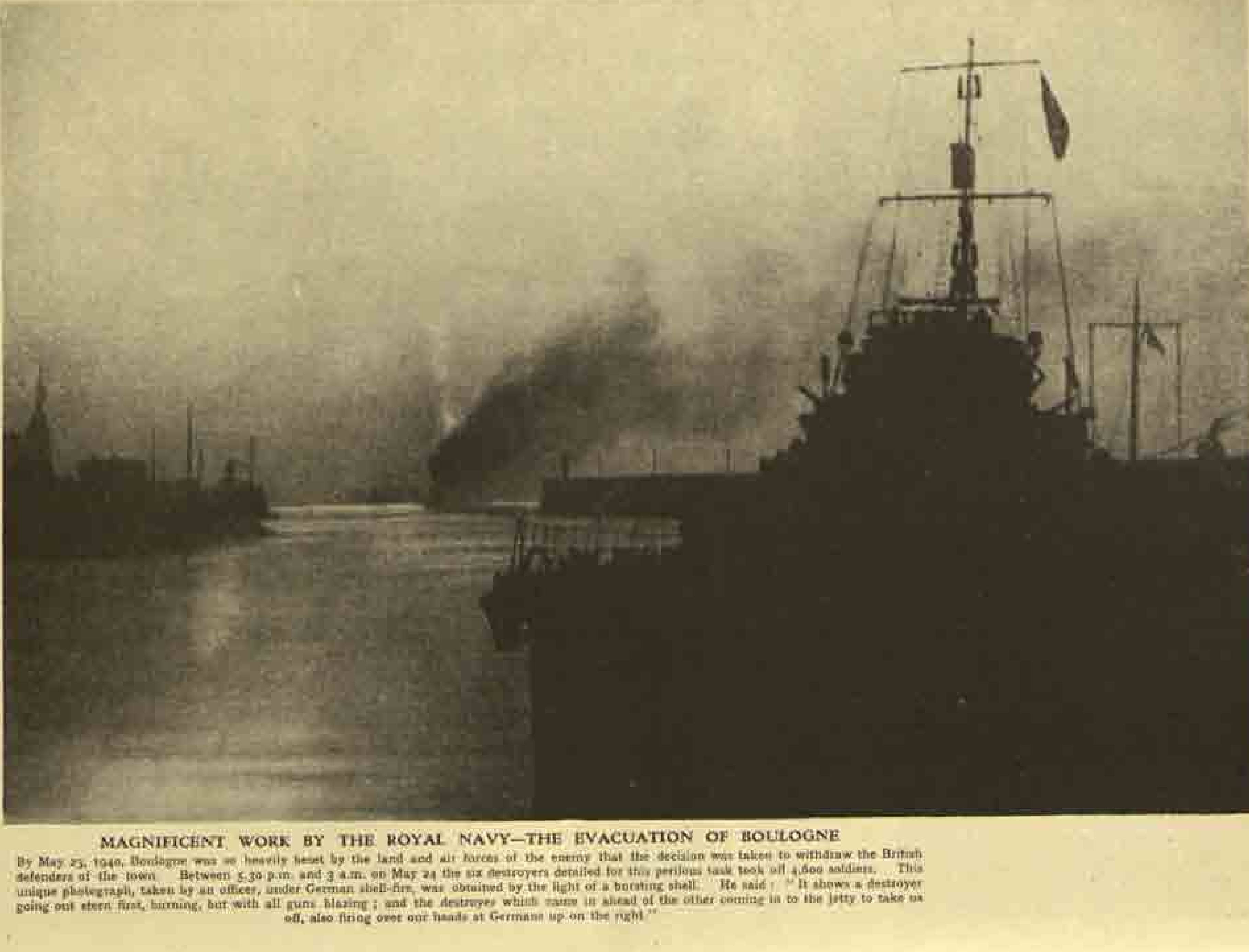
CALAIS BY NIGHT: BOULOGNE BY DAY

The night photograph above was taken from the Kent coast during the last week-end in May, 1940. It shows the glow from huge fires in the direction of Calais. In the photo below, clouds of smoke can be seen rising from the heavily bombarded port of Boulogne. This photograph was taken by an R.A.F. reconnaissance machine about the same period.

Photos, "News Chronicle"; British Official: Crown Copyright

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MAGNIFICENT WORK BY THE ROYAL NAVY—THE EVACUATION OF BOULOGNE

By May 23, 1940, Boulogne was so heavily beset by the land and air forces of the enemy that the decision was taken to withdraw the British defenders of the town. Between 5.30 p.m. and 3 a.m. on May 24 the six destroyers detailed for this perilous task took off 4,600 soldiers. This unique photograph, taken by an officer, under German shell-fire, was obtained by the light of a bursting shell. He said: "It shows a destroyer going out stern first, burning, but with all guns blazing; and the destroyer which came in ahead of the other coming in to the jetty to take us off, also firing over our heads at Germans up on the right."

house had to be conquered. The Englishmen had made every house a fortress."

Three thousand British troops with about one thousand French fought to the last against great odds merely to gain time. The London Territorials' share of glory was underlined when it became known that Brigadier Nicholson, commanding officer of the Queen Victoria's Rifles, was in command of the entire defence force. The Queen Victoria's Rifles was a London Territorial regiment recruited largely from men of the big drapery stores, the headquarters of the unit being in the West End. The battalion that took part in the defence of Calais had been turned into a mobile motor-cycle unit, early in 1939, as part of the scheme for doubling the Territorial Army. They were in camp for training when the call came for more men to stem the enemy's onrush through France, and were sent across the Channel as an infantry battalion, without their motor-cycles. On Sunday, May 26, about 8 a.m., the Germans gave the Brigadier an hour in which to surrender. His reply, as quoted by the German communiqué, was "The answer is 'No'!" The bombardment from the German guns and 'planes now intensified. Before the end of the afternoon most of the town and the docks were smashed and burning, but two extra German armoured divisions, which the enemy had intended for the drive towards Dunkirk, were being kept busy at Calais. Just before this final phase, when the garrison retired into the ancient Citadel, a British destroyer had entered the port and succeeded in landing a reconnaissance party, including Vice-Admiral Somerville, who said in a broadcast:

"I went over at night to Calais in one of our destroyers, when the garrison was hard pressed, was surrounded by superior forces, but was holding on grimly. As we made fast alongside the quay we came under heavy fire.

"With shells bursting alongside and on the quay the captain gave the order to cast off the wires, and with coolness and precision backed his ship clear of this unhealthy berth and brought her alongside at a spot which was less exposed to fire. Every order he gave



SAVED BOULOGNE HEROES

Vice-Admiral Bertram Ramsay, above, organized the evacuation of British troops from Boulogne on the night of May 23–24, 1940. Six destroyers brought off 4,600 men under heavy fire and bombardment.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"



BOULOGNE HARBOUR

The pictorial plan above shows the French port of Boulogne, which was finally occupied by the Germans on May 26, 1940, after some days of fierce fighting by Allied troops. The remaining British troops were evacuated by the Navy, and from then onwards the port was rendered almost unusable for the Nazis by the continuous raids of the R.A.F.

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*

REFERENCE

① German Columns closing in on town ② Enemy Bombers
③ French & British destroyers shelling north of town
④ Central Railway Station under shell-fire ⑤ Destroyer shelling Crane
⑥ Destroyer Leaving Outer Port stern first ⑦ Drifter ready to evacuate troops
⑧ Floating Dock ⑨ Landing Stage ⑩ Maritime Station ⑪ Outer Port ⑫ Basin
⑬ Loubet Basin ⑭ Port de Marée ⑮ Swing Bridges ⑯ Inner Port ⑰ River Liane
⑱ Carnot Mole ⑲ Britannia Statue ⑳ Casino ㉑ Church of Notre-Dame
㉒ Town Hall ㉓ Napoleon's Column ㉔ Gas Works



'NO SURRENDER'

Brigadier Claude Nicholson (above), with 3,000 British and 1,000 French troops, held Calais to the end, refusing to surrender to the Germans. He was eventually taken prisoner. Right, are badges of the four British regiments which held out in Calais. *Photo, Universal*



Royal Tank Regt. Rifle Brigade 60th. Rifles Q. Victoria's Rifles

was carried out faithfully and courageously, regardless of the bursting shells.

"On shore I found a brigadier—a very gallant brigadier—in command of our troops. His quiet confidence, his grim determination to hold out to the last man, was an inspiration to everyone there. No thought of surrender, no thought but to serve their country to the utmost of their endeavour and to the last man. And this they did.

"The men who have stood to their duty, under the conditions I have described, are men in the truest sense of the word."

On the morning of Monday, May 27, before the fight for the Citadel had ended and silence had fallen on Calais, R.A.F. pilots in forty Lysander 'planes flew over in three waves from a south of England aerodrome. The aircraft were each loaded with 10-gallon water containers in the bomb-rack, the containers being fitted with parachutes. The smoke of the conflagration veiled the target, but, flying very low over the Citadel walls through heavy gunfire, the airmen dropped the water and returned. Several 'planes were badly hit; one was seen to dive into the ground after its load had been delivered. Later in the morning another R.A.F. force, including some dive-bombers to harass the enemy's guns, flew over the Citadel and dropped parcels of hand-grenades and ammunition. But by next day the remnant of the garrison had been silenced.

Brigadier Claude Nicholson was taken prisoner with the remnant of his men. Of the Brigadier his close friend, General Sir Hubert Gough, said: "Nicholson is perhaps the most brilliant officer of his standing in the British Army."

The award of the Military Cross to the Rev. Richard Newcombe Craig, announced on July 19, revealed a story of heroic devotion.

"On May 23 the Padre arrived at Calais when it was already menaced by the enemy, being under continual bombing and shell-fire. He declined to embark for England. He voluntarily established an aid post with straggler personnel near Calais Docks Station. Here, without a medical officer for three days, he organized the dressing and evacuation of some 300 wounded."

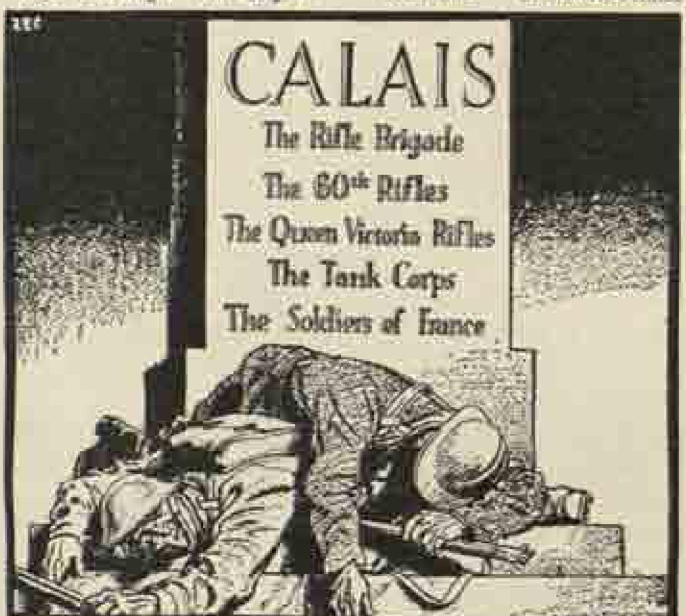
The official narrative in the "Gazette" goes on to tell that Craig learned that six badly wounded men were lying on the dunes, under enemy sniping fire and unable to get away. Without hesitation the Padre called for four volunteers, and drove an ambulance to a spot near by; with his four helpers he crawled to the wounded men and rescued them all. Then he drove back under fire.

A story told to Lionel Crane, "Daily Express" staff reporter, by two men of one of the British units fills in some of the details in the imperishable story of the defence. Extracts are here given. One of the Tommies said:

"We got to the town in the afternoon on May 23, disembarked and sat about on the sand dunes near the docks waiting for the ship that was bringing our tanks and guns. She did not show up until the evening. It was very serious for us, because all the weapons we had were a few Bren guns, which had been kept for anti-aircraft protection. When the ship did arrive the French stevedores refused to unload her. They said they had been working forty-eight hours without food and rest. So the job was done by some sappers and our own men. They were inexperienced and it was a slow business. While they were still unloading the ship a hospital train with a large number of wounded came into Calais Station. At the request of the medical officer in charge our unloading party were turned into stretcher bearers. They carried the wounded from the train into the ship, in which most of our equipment was still lying. Orders were received that further disembarkation of material was to cease, and that the boat was to go back to England with the wounded, which it did. About 60 per cent of our vehicles, ammunition and weapons went back with it.

"On Friday (May 24) a small mixed column, using such vehicles as it could get, and about four medium tanks, was organized, and went out at dawn towards Dunkirk. They were supposed to be on reconnaissance. They had a merry little engagement with the Germans, in which two of our tanks were blown up and two men killed. They certainly killed twelve Germans.

"On Friday afternoon an order was given to man the outer lines, and this was done. There was a good deal of fighting and a lot of light-hearted sniping. At dusk we heard that large numbers of German tanks were approaching. During the



Their Name Liveth for Evermore!

From the cartoon by ZEC. Courtesy of "The Daily Mirror"

PADRE OF CALAIS

During the darkest hours of the siege the Rev. R. N. Craig (below) laboured unceasingly for the wounded. He established an aid post near the Docks Station and in three days organized the dressing and evacuation of some 300 men. For his devotion to duty he was awarded the M.C. *Photo, G.P.U.*





REFERENCE

(1) Rifle Brigade & 60th Rifles (Assembly position in sand dunes May 23)
(2) Channel (3) Tidal Basin (4) West Dock (5) Sluicing Basins
(6) Carnot Dock (7) Aufeld Channel (8) Refugees
(9) Q.V.R. company guarding approaches from Dunkirk (May 23) (10) 60th Rifles patrols (May 24)
(11) Maritime Station (Brigade H.Q. May 24) (12) Central Station (13) Fort Risban
(14) Citadel (Advanced Brigade H.Q. May 25) (15) Dive Bombers attacking Docks

THE STRUGGLE FOR CALAIS

This pictorial plan of Calais shows in graphic manner where the Allied troops held out against great odds in the battle for the Channel Ports at the end of May, 1940. The numbered references on the left should be consulted in connexion with the text. (See also plan in p. 1569.)

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*

night the order was given to retire to the inner lines. There was terrific and incessant machine-gun fire. The Germans were right in the streets. During the night it was fairly quiet. At dawn (May 25) the old ramparts were shelled heavily for about twenty minutes.

"Two officers in a small car drove miles round the town. They went much farther than they were supposed to do, and when they returned they said they would see hardly any Germans at all. Later in the day, however, we knew the enemy had come back. The main attack started from the east and south-east. Our chaps were posted all round Calais on the bridges, trying to hold the Germans back.

"They just sat smack in the middle of the road with their machine-guns in front of them and peppered away: there was nothing to protect them. Sniping from the rear and from houses all round us became very much more intense. It was difficult to catch these snipers. We would see shots coming from a certain house, and we would dash in, only to find a French peasant reading his book or raking over his garden at the back.

"It must have been one of the strangest battles in history. While we were being driven back and fighting every inch of the way, and while German guns and 'planes

were raining down shells and bombs into the streets, there were hundreds of civilians going about their daily life as though it were a normal week-end.

"I had a windy message from one platoon saying they were surrounded, and I hurried down to see them. They had had a considerable number of casualties, and I went back to company headquarters, which was near the quay. When I got there I heard people in the next garden jabbering excitedly. . . . I looked over the wall and there were about ten Germans.

"We rushed from headquarters and drove them out of the garden with rifles and revolvers. They grabbed women and children standing in the streets and ran with them into a near-by house.

"We could not fire heavy stuff at the house while the women and children were there, and we just had to leave them."

The real enemy attack began a few hours later. A sergeant-major who was there told Mr. Crane:

"Sunday morning, breakfast time, I was issuing rations. I had the water boiling for tea when the bombing started. I had



RIFLEMEN OF CALAIS FAME

Men of the Queen Victoria's Rifles were among the small British force which held out gallantly in Calais towards the end of May, 1940. Above, men of this Territorial regiment are seen on their way to a training camp shortly before the war.

Photo, Courtesy of the London "Evening News"



HERE THERE WAS NO SURRENDER

In the old Citadel at Calais, an entrance to which is seen above, British troops put up a strong resistance in face of a tremendous onslaught. Though outnumbered, they refused to surrender and, as the Nazis acknowledged, 'fought with courage and desperation' until almost all of them were killed or captured. (See also photograph in p. 1560.)

Photo, Associated Press

no arms with me, so I lay down in the sand dunes with a tin of corned beef in each hand.

"In the afternoon the Germans ran up the Nazi flag on the fort. Then British warships steamed in and shelled Calais to a shambles and the flag went down. Now I was hiding underneath the pier. There were fifty others beside me, and we were so close to the Germans that we watched them placing snipers on the forts only eighty yards away.

"There were three officers among us and about eight rifles. We stayed under the pier until 9.30. We were wet and cold and we had had nothing to eat or drink for hours.

"When it was dark we climbed up into the signalling tower on the pier to get a bit of shelter. We were amazed when we got there to find a captain of the Marines. He told us he had been there all day. He had broken down doors and woodwork from the pier and had made some rafts. He said that if we could get nothing else we might push off on these. Others suggested they would swim out to a Belgian boat which was stuck in the harbour. Then, at two in the morning, a yacht came into the harbour looking for survivors. In the darkness it went right past us up to the shore end of the pier, and we did not see it. We caught it just as it was going out to sea again, and signalled to it that we were there. It took us all off and landed us back in England."

In August there became available more details about the struggle for Calais, in a report by Captain A. Williams, Adjutant of the 60th Rifles.

In this narrative the Adjutant explained how the force under Brigadier Nicholson had been handicapped by the loss, right at the start of operations, of some of its



HE VISITED CALAIS BESIEGED

Vice-Admiral J. F. Somerville, above, went himself to Calais in a destroyer when the garrison was holding out and made a personal reconnaissance with a picked party of men.

Photo, Keystone

equipment. The following account is based on one that appeared in the "Daily Telegraph."

The 60th Rifles and the Rifle Brigade, on disembarkation, moved to a position of assembly in the sand dunes on the Dunkirk side of Calais, where they waited for their vehicles and other equipment. The first vehicle ship carrying the equipment of the 60th Rifles began unloading, but the French stevedores were unwilling to work the crane. There was some shelling by the enemy, and although a strong detachment of Royal Engineers was employed the unloading was not completed until early the next day.

The ship in which was the Rifle Brigade equipment moved to the quayside and unloading began two hours later, but all work was stopped owing to the departure of the stevedores. Meanwhile, wounded were reaching the quay to board the ship, which eventually returned to England without discharging her cargo.

Capt. Williams stated that it is not known on whose authority the vessel was ordered to return. The consequence was that the Rifle Brigade lost the greater part of its vehicles and equipment, including ammunition.

After the German demand for immediate surrender was refused, on May 26, there followed heavy bombardment, accompanied by almost incessant dive-bombing from the air.

"Our defensive position and the inner town," said Capt. Williams, "were reduced to a shambles and set in flames. At about 4 p.m. the enemy was in possession of the whole of the docks area and had overpowered the remainder of the Rifle Brigade. The Rifle Brigade Battalion Headquarters and a portion of the Queen Victoria's Rifles, who were reinforcing them, were captured; also the rear Brigade Headquarters.

"The French troops in the Citadel surrendered, and advanced Brigade H.Q. was captured, including the Brigadier. Fort Risban, to the west of the town, had also fallen."

Meanwhile, the 60th Rifles were forced back and eventually surrounded. The battalion split up into small parties at dusk. They attempted to hide in the ruined town and make their way out by night, but the darkness was lit by the flames of the burning ruins and most of them were captured.

Only thirty unwounded men had been evacuated from Calais by the Navy. The remainder were killed or captured. But the heroic resistance had hampered the German advance for another four days—a respite that proved all the more precious because of the disaster that occurred on May 28, when King Leopold of the Belgians ordered his army to lay down its arms. This treacherous capitulation, only eighteen days after the Germans had begun the invasion of Belgium, opened wide the road to Dunkirk and simultaneously uncovered the British left flank.

CAPTURED BUT NOT DISGRACED

Of the three thousand British soldiers who withstood the German attack at Calais, almost all were killed or captured. Below is a column of British prisoners being marched away from the town after their great stand against a force vastly superior in strength.

Photo, Associated Press









IN THE STREETS OF DOOMED DUNKIRK

Here are scenes in the shattered town of Dunkirk during the period of the evacuation. Above, British soldiers marching through a debris-littered street ; left, the statue of Jean Bart in the main square still stands amid the ruins ; below, columns of smoke rising from the burning town.

Photos, Planet News ; Section Cinéma de l'Armée ; Service Cinématographique de la Marine

'A MIRACLE OF DELIVERANCE': EVACUATION OF THE B.E.F. FROM DUNKIRK

Withdrawal Behind the 'Corunna Line'—'A Miracle of Deliverance'—The Navy and the Volunteer Fleet—Wading Out From the Beaches—Pleasure Steamers to the Rescue—Ordeal on Dunkirk Shores—Impotence of the Luftwaffe—A Triumph of Cooperation—Strategic Lessons of the Withdrawal

(Colour maps explaining the retreat and evacuation are printed in pages 1538-9)

The events which followed on the surrender of the Belgian army are related in Chapter 87. Behind what they themselves described in graphic phrase as the "Corunna Line," held by a gallant rearguard, the bulk of the British Army from Flanders made their way to the beaches of Dunkirk, there to face the most dangerous and trying ordeal known to the soldier. This ordeal of withdrawal in the face of the enemy had seemed indeed so grave to the authorities in London that even a sanguine estimate allowed for the safe evacuation of only about one-tenth of that great number—335,000—actually brought off safely from the Dunkirk beaches.

This evacuation, the greatest feat of its kind in the history of warfare, was carried out under conditions never experienced before, owing to the terrific development of air power and mechanized military force. The flooding of the Yser valley had checked the enemy's mechanized divisions. These were estimated to consist of all that the German Command could spare, besides 40 divisions of other troops amounting to 750,000 men. But even if such a land force could be held off, what of the menace from the air! Bold indeed was it to predict the possibility of so difficult and vast an evacuation close to the bases of the enemy's much vaunted air force.

On May 30, however, it was officially announced that with the help of the Royal Navy the troops not actively engaged in the fighting had been evacuated—French troops to other French ports farther west, and British troops to England. The R.A.F. had been and still were furiously attacking the enemy's communications, his bases, and his swarming 'planes, establishing a local air superiority everywhere they fought.

Successful Evacuation

So successful did the withdrawal prove that the pace and extent of the evacuation were now increased. Hitherto several flotillas of British destroyers and numerous smaller craft had been cooperating with units of the French fleet; it was necessary now to call upon a great host of willing volunteers, civilian craft and crews, for additional transport.

On June 4 Mr. Winston Churchill addressed the House of Commons. His speech in itself had a tonic effect on the nation, which suddenly realized that it had found its great leader in the time of trial. Eloquent and precise, Mr. Churchill made the world aware of the true meaning of the terse communiqués of the Navy and Air Force. His phrase, "a miracle of deliverance," for the completed evacuation was seen to be justified. No fewer than 335,000 British and French troops had been safely embarked and transported under the guns and bombers of a powerful and triumphant enemy. The total included the whole of the B.E.F. personnel in the Dunkirk area, about a quarter of a million men. The remaining 100,000 of the B.E.F. were now in a perilous situation in north-west France, and the French northern armies were out of action. In a long series of fierce battles the B.E.F. had lost 30,000 men killed, wounded, and missing. This was much smaller than the loss certainly inflicted on the enemy, "but our losses in material are enormous," Mr. Churchill told the House.

"We have, perhaps, lost one third of the men we lost in the opening days of the battle of March 21, 1918, but we have lost nearly 1,000 guns, and all our transport, and all armoured vehicles that were with the Army in the North. . . . Our thankfulness at the escape of our Army must not blind us to the fact that what has happened in France and Belgium is a colossal military disaster."

Mr. Churchill's warning, spoken before people had an inkling of the imminent collapse of France, could not take away from the splendour of that triumph in



A V.C. HERO OF DUNKIRK

One of the first two Victoria Crosses to be awarded to the Army in the Second Great War was won by Lieut. (later Captain) Harold Marcus Ervine-Andrews of the East Lancashire Regt. He took over about 1,000 yards of defences in front of Dunkirk and held them for over ten hours in face of vastly superior forces, personally accounting for seventeen of the enemy with his rifle and for many more with a Bren gun. He is seen above (right) being congratulated by Flying Officer Peter Dexter, D.F.C.

Photo, Topical

adversity which he had to describe. The Allies had been carrying out the evacuation without pause throughout a week. On Sunday, June 2, when the fighting French rearguards were beginning to retire to the port and beach, Admiral Abrial was reported from Paris as having guaranteed to hold Dunkirk as long as needful, and "with a little assistance indefinitely." The Admiral was one of the last to leave Dunkirk, the defence of which he himself had planned and organized. Finally, everything of military value at the port was destroyed and for months to come Dunkirk would be useless to the enemy.

The losses in ships during this amazing evacuation had been surprisingly small:

Naval Losses

the French lost seven destroyers and a supply ship, while the British lost six destroyers and 24 minor craft. But nearly 1,700 Allied vessels had been engaged in the narrowest part of the Channel, by day and night, carrying out the most difficult of all operations in warfare. The motley armada consisted of 220 light warships and 665 other craft employed by the British, and 300 warships and merchant vessels with 200 smaller craft used by the French.

The success of the volunteer fleet and the undaunted courage of the troops especially struck the imagination of the British people. Craft of all types dotted the Channel waters from coast to coast, and off the port of Dunkirk and the long pleasure beach of Malo-les-Bains were often clustered in hundreds at a time. Everything had ultimately depended upon their prompt arrival and the eager and untiring service of the personnel. The Admiralty with great foresight had previously obtained full details of all small vessels that might be available for such work, and the order for their assembly met with instantaneous response. Fishermen, yachtsmen, yacht clubs, boat builders, longshore pleasure-craft owners from our seaside resorts far and near, river boatmen and boat-building and hiring firms, even the crews of the London fire floats, manned their craft and rushed them to the assembly point even before they had learnt for what purpose the vessels were needed. And once the truth was out, the press of volunteers was so great that it began to embarrass the responsible naval officials; men joined in the great adventure by stratagem when they could not go by order. Even women



C.-IN-C. AT DUNKIRK

Major-General H. R. L. Alexander, D.S.O., M.C., was the officer placed in command of the B.E.F. in Dunkirk when Lord Gort returned to England. During the war of 1914-18 he was mentioned five times in dispatches. (See also photo in p. 1543.)

Photo, Elliott & Fry

BRITISH POST IN THE BELGIAN SAND DUNES

Two soldiers of the B.E.F. are seen outside a dug-out in the sand dunes at Nieuport, a Belgian town between Dunkirk and Ostend. Most of the fine old buildings in Nieuport were destroyed during the 1914-18 war when there was much fighting around the town.

Photo, Associated Press



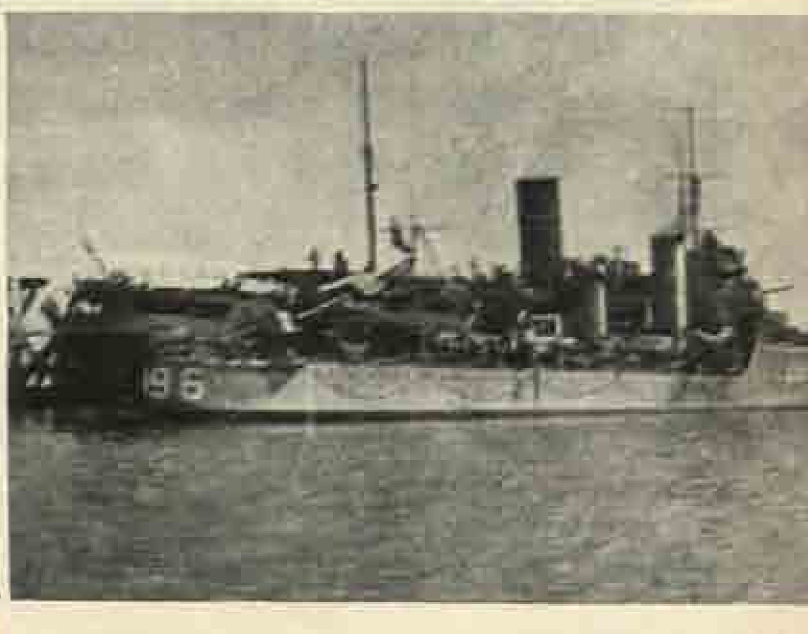




THIS WAS THE 'MIRACLE'

Above, British troops filing along a jetty at Dunkirk, while machine-guns guard them from low-flying air attack. Right, one of the many auxiliary craft which assisted in the evacuation lying off the blazing town. Below, left, the C.O. with officers and men of the Royal Ulster Rifles waiting on a jetty hurriedly improvised from sunken lorries. Below, right, a British destroyer and another vessel ready to embark men of the B.E.F. from a jetty.
Photos, "News Chronicle"; L.N.A.; "The Times"





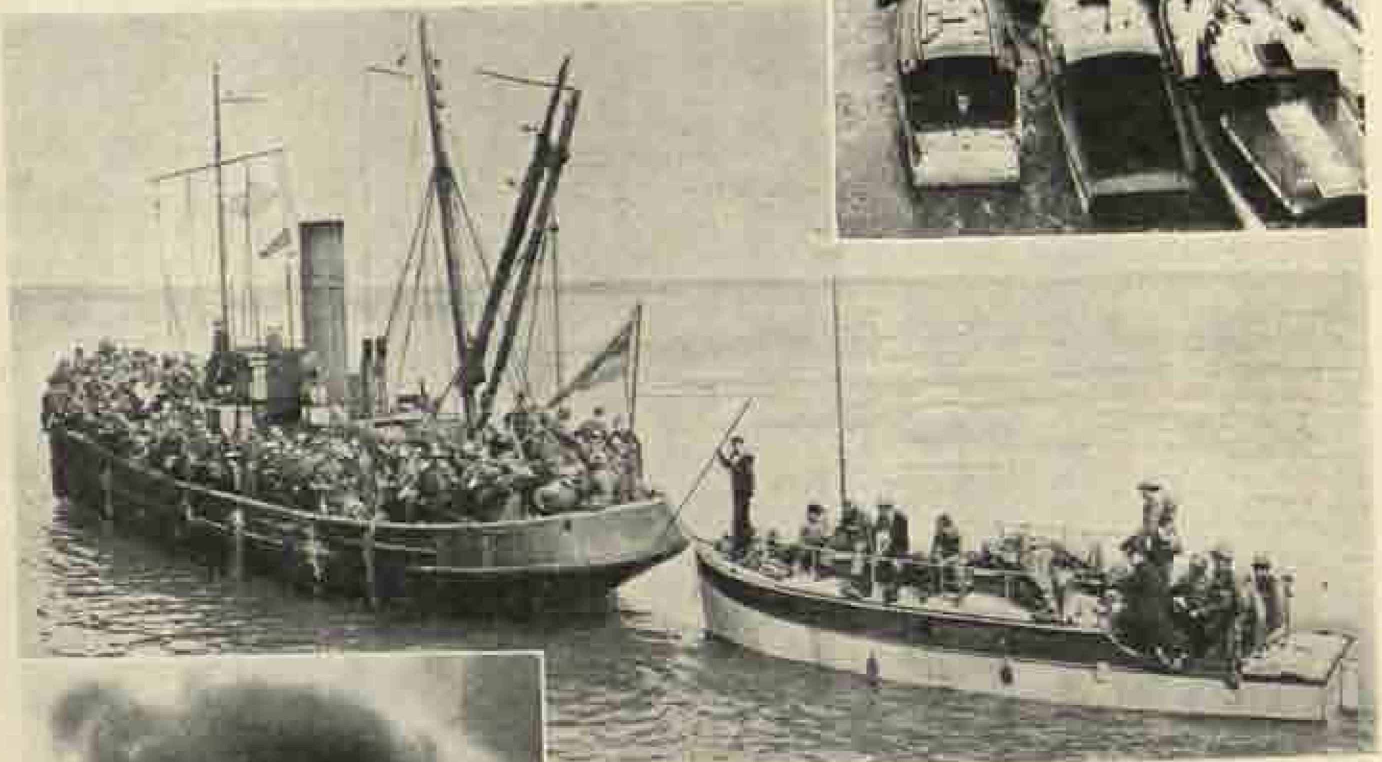
tried to take part with their own yachts or motor-boats.

To and fro, by day and by night, so long as there were men to be transported, these vessels plied the Straits of Dover. Embarking loads of men under artillery fire and aerial bombardment, often subjected to machine-gun fire from land and air, they took off soldiers from the crowded beaches, or from ferry craft that came out to meet them. Then they made their passage to ports along the south-east and south coasts of England, enlivened by the cheers and witticisms of the soldiers they had rescued from death or a cruel imprisonment. Thousands of wounded were brought home in those fateful days.

From the Dunkirk Beaches

The homely touch of the civilian fleet extended to many of the properly commissioned naval auxiliaries engaged, among which were ships affectionately remembered by holiday makers as pleasure steamers. These seemed to have suffered a big proportion of casualties, and the Admiralty's revised list of losses included four paddle minesweepers: "Brighton Belle" (Lieut. L. K. Perrin, R.N.V.R.); "Gracie Fields" (Lieut. A. C. Weeks, R.N.R.); "Waverley" (Lieut. S. F. Harmer-Elliott, R.N.V.R.); "Brighton Queen" (Lieut. A. Stubbs, R.N.R.). There was also the "Crested







SMALL CRAFT WHICH WORKED WONDERS

Craft of all kinds were pressed into service for the evacuation of the B.E.F. from Northern France. Top right, some of the small river craft returning up the Thames after their unusual journey. Above, small craft laden with French and British troops. Left, an old paddle steamer towing some of the small boats used to carry the men from the beaches to larger vessels.

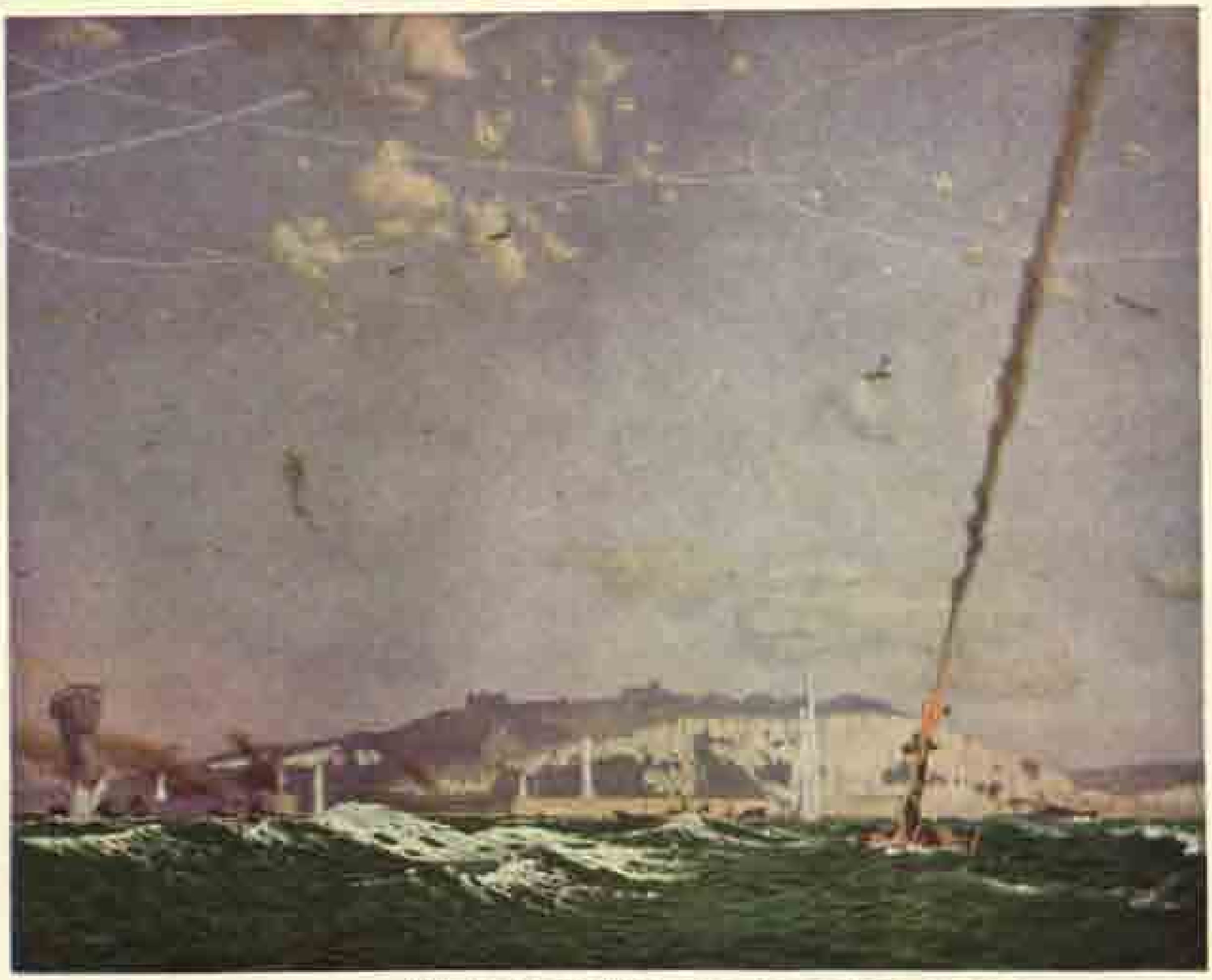
Photos, G.P.U.; "The Times"

Eagle" (Lieut.-Cmdr. B. R. Booth, R.N.R.), described as "one minesweeper."

Perhaps it was only to be expected that hospital ships transporting wounded would be singled out for special attention from the Nazi bombers, and several minor casualties caused by aerial machine-gun fire included some of the brave women nurses, who had continued to tend their patients even on the bombarded Dunkirk beaches.

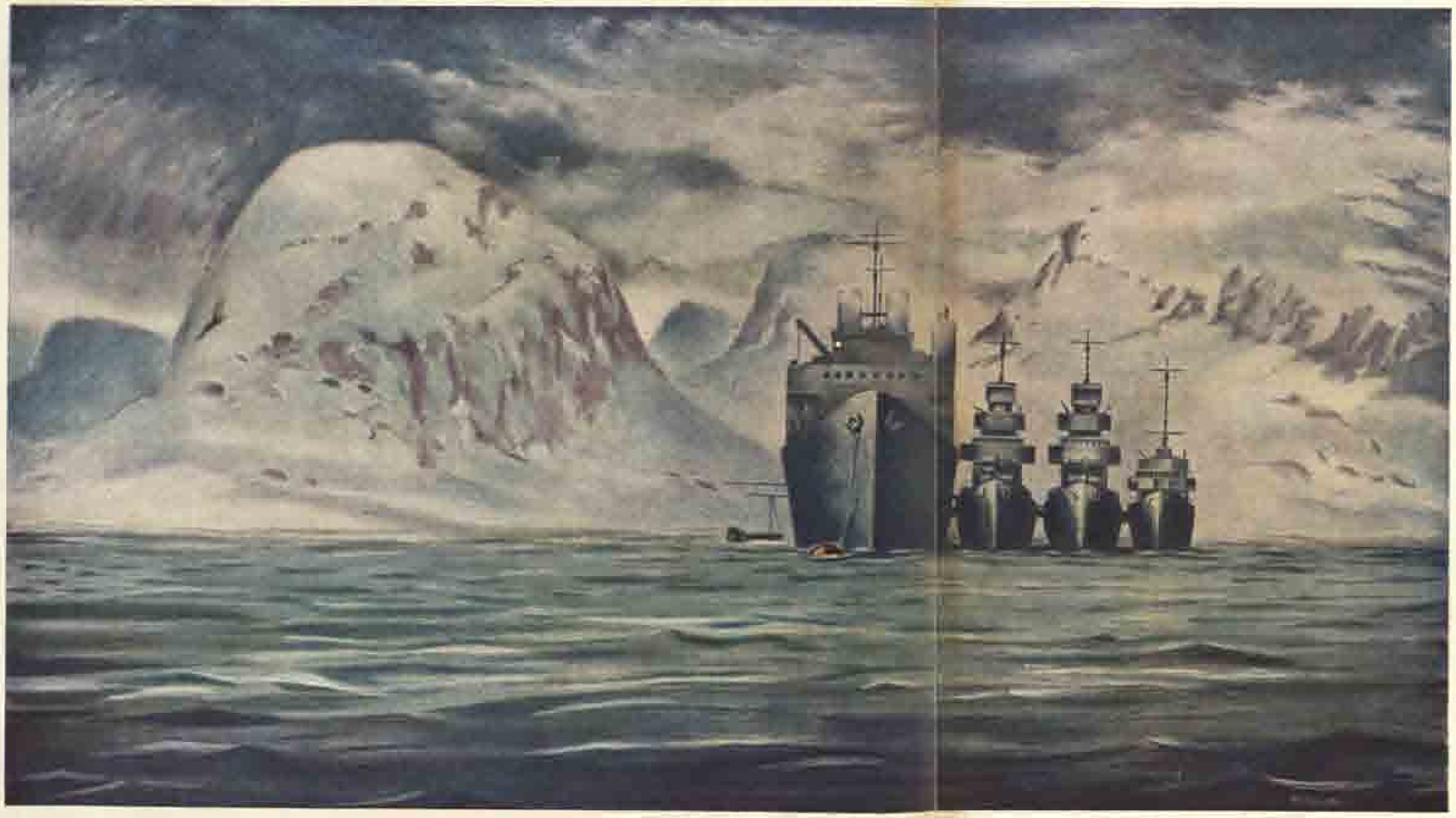
Many stirring incidents of the cross-Channel voyages became known later. Charles Knight, aged 69, had somehow got himself included among the volunteer crew of nine in a motor-boat. Under constant fire the little vessel ferried men from the beach to the transports for three days and nights. Another volunteer was a boy of 15, who took his regular place in his father's





BATTLE OF BRITAIN, 1940, AS ARTISTS SAW IT

Richard Eurich (Admiralty Artist, 1940), painted the striking picture reproduced at top, 'Night Attack Over Southampton Water.' With its spirited handling and bold contrasts it is a fine documentation to those nights of ordeal and victory. Charles Pears has recorded for posterity a daytime battle scene of the period, 'Off Dover, 1940.' The sky criss-crossed with vapour trails left by raiders and defenders, the bursting shells, balloons, falling raiders and pursuing Spitfires—all make up an unforgettable impression.
(Official Purchase, 1941.) Exhibited at the National Gallery, London, 1941. Crown Copyright reserved









WITH ALLIED DESTROYERS ON PATROL AND CONVOY IN NORTH SEA AND NORTH ATLANTIC

Mr. Tom Lea, who is responsible for the impressive water-colour reproduced above, sailed in a United States destroyer to a North Atlantic base shortly before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour brought his country into the war as an unqualified belligerent. By the time he reached the base the Axis had declared war on the U.S. It was an icy grey dawn, with mist and low cloud enshrouding the mountains and the forbidding shore. The big supply ship is signalling with her lamp to a destroyer in the distance. Alongside, dwarfed by her bulk, are three American destroyers—two modern ones and another (farthest to right) dating back to the First Great War. Moored to the projecting booms on the starboard side are motor boats, in one of which the artist journeyed to the scene from a destroyer which halted two miles away on account of storm.

The three remaining illustrations, from photographs taken in natural colours, were obtained on British destroyers of the 'Hunt' class while on patrol and convoy duty in the North Sea. Left, constant watch for enemy aircraft is kept by the crew of an Oerlikon heavy machine-gun. The layer is seen with his hand on the U-shaped guard into which he rests his shoulder when operating the controls. His sighting eyepiece and frame-sight are above. These weapons are used for low-flying aircraft which have eluded the 4-inch A.A. guns of the destroyer and the multiple pom-poms seen in the next photograph, at top, right.

Familiarly known as the 'Chicago Piano,' the two-pounder multiple pom-pom is a deadly weapon—quick-firing, fed from shell racks kept full by the gun crew, in which ammunition is automatically brought to the breeches of the two to six barrels. The pattern of shells it projects against a raider spells almost certain destruction within the lethal area. The gunners seen here are enjoying a spell of relaxation but can get to work in an instant on an alert. Like those at the machine-guns described above, they have not only aircraft but enemy motor torpedo-boats to guard against.

At the end of the duty spell of convoy escort or anti-submarine patrol comes the welcome break ashore, though this respite from the constant vigilance of service is often brief enough. The bottom right-hand photograph shows the davits being swung out to drop down shore boats.

Drawing by permission of the artist. Direct colour photographs by Fox Photos



THE WITHDRAWAL FROM DUNKIRK, MAY 26 TO JUNE 2, 1940

The wide, flat sands of the Dunkirk beaches, strewn with troops awaiting embarkation, the calm, shallow seas bringing boats of all kinds to the rescue, are here reflected in the lurid light of the burning town. Through the pall of smoke from oil depots and supply dumps fly Allied and enemy aircraft. Charles Cundall, A.R.A., is one of the eight official artists, appointed by the War Artists' Advisory Committee, who are attached to the Armed Forces. His impression of the scene at Dunkirk may be compared with the photographic illustrations in pages 912–920 and 925–928.

From the painting by Charles Cundall, A.R.A., Crown Copyright

motor-boat, while the pair continuously made cross-Channel trips, bringing our men home.

At some places, owing to the shallowness of the water, even wherries were used to get the troops away. Eight soldiers at a time would wade out to the wherries, which then took their loads to waiting motor-boats, in which the men were carried to transports farther out still. Many of the smaller craft were riddled by shrapnel and bullets when they got back at last to England.

Wading Out to Safety

Some of the troops landed had been in the thick of the rearguard fighting only a few hours before, while others had patiently waited for 24, 36 or even hours on the perilous beaches, existing on iron rations until their turn came to be taken off. One motor-boat laden with men stopped in the Channel to pick up two German airmen who had been shot down. Often vessels were chased more than half-way across to England and machine-gunned by enemy 'planes, but the enemy aircraft had a few unpleasant surprises from our troops, who did not neglect to make use of any machine-guns they had been able to fetch away.

Not the least remarkable feature of the evacuation was its orderliness under such trying conditions. The beaches by Dunkirk were described by one of the returned men as being crowded "like Blackpool on Bank Holiday," but when photographs of the scene were published they showed orderly dispositions of masses of troops who advanced step by step in column and echelon, spaced out to avoid giving the German dive-bombers too wide a target anywhere. Most of the men still carried their rifles and equipment, and some of them even brought back "souvenirs," ranging from a kitten to a caged canary. Hundreds had had to stand waist high in water for long spells, waiting their turn to wade out to the boats.

It was very fortunate that, on the whole, the weather was good and the



FRENCH NAVAL HERO

In this photograph Vice-Admiral Jean-Marie Abrial, Commander-in-Chief of the French Maritime Forces of the North, is seen in front of Bastion 32, a centre of the Allied resistance at Dunkirk. He was one of the last to leave Dunkirk, which he had held in the face of an overwhelming onslaught by the Germans. On his right is M. Paul Bargeton, French Ambassador in Brussels.

Photo, Service Photographique de la Marine

ZEEBRUGGE BLOCKED ONCE AGAIN

History repeated itself at Zeebrugge when, during the period of the B.E.F. evacuation from the Dunkirk area, the Royal Navy sank concrete-filled block-ships across the lock gates of the canal as shown in the photograph below. Zeebrugge had been successfully blocked by the British Navy in April, 1918.

Photo, Fox





SMILING AFTER THEIR GREAT ORDEAL

Some 335,000 British and French troops were safely embarked and withdrawn from the Dunkirk area. In this photograph a mass of steel-helmeted British soldiers is seen on the quayside of a home port after safe deliverance from the hands of the enemy.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

sea was comparatively calm, or the difficulties of the Navy would have been even greater. The shallow water, narrow channels, and strong tides were serious enough, and in the port itself, while it could still be used, extreme care had to be taken. In the words of an Admiralty communiqué:

"The situation was such that one mistake in the handling of a ship might have blocked a vital channel or that part of the port of Dunkirk which could be used."

On two days a fresh north-westerly wind raised a surf which slowed down the work at the beaches, and only on one forenoon did a ground mist curtail enemy air activity.

"In addition to almost incessant bombing and machine-gun attacks on Dunkirk, the beaches, and the vessels operating off them, the port of Dunkirk and the shipping plying to and fro were under frequent shell fire. This was to some extent checked by bombardment of the enemy artillery positions by our Naval forces. Naval bombardment also protected the flanks of the withdrawal. The enemy was active with submarines and high speed motor torpedo boats. Losses have been inflicted upon both these forces."

The relative ineffectiveness of the enemy's motor torpedo boats must have been another disappointment for him, as much had been hoped from the use of fast craft of this type, which could strike quickly and escape speedily. And while the battle raged in the Dunkirk area our Navy blocked the Belgian port of Zeebrugge by sinking concrete-filled blockships, and demolished the sea-gates of the canal. Nor did the Marines forget to destroy the fuel stocks.

Blocking of Zeebrugge

Though not always in view of the men on the beaches or those fighting their way to Dunkirk, the fighters and bombers of the R.A.F. were guarding the B.E.F. all the while. The enemy's failure to prevent the evacuation was the best proof that the R.A.F. had been harassing him all the time, even when British machines were neither heard nor seen by the B.E.F. It was to answer a natural but mistaken feeling of grievance that the Prime Minister in his speech in the House of Commons on June 4 paid a special tribute to our airmen, which was reinforced by that of the War Office communiqué.

There were some dog-fights between British and German machines above the actual scene of the evacuation, and Mr. Churchill referred to one such incident when a German bomber was driven into the water after casting away all its bombs; it had been forced down by the ruse of an R.A.F. pilot, who, in fact, had used up all his ammunition.

Indeed, alongside the demonstration of Britain's command of the seas, the

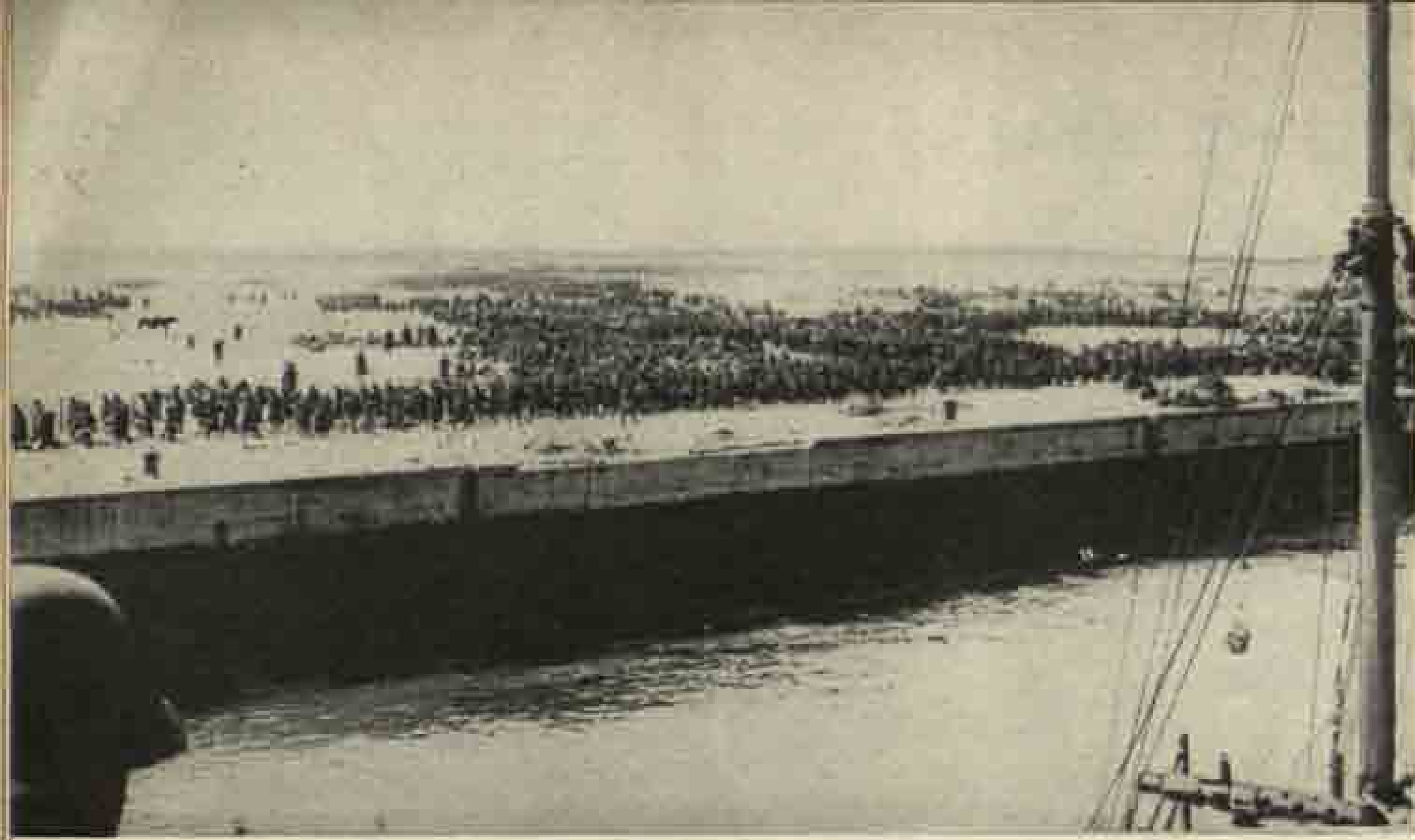




AFTERMATH OF DUNKIRK

In the photograph above is seen all that remained of a hospital train after German bombers had attacked it in Dunkirk harbour. The burned-out hulk of the hospital ship to which the wounded were to have been transferred lies alongside the quay. Left, Count Ciano, Italian Foreign Minister (standing in car), surveys the beaches near Dunkirk after the evacuation of the B.E.F. Below, the outskirts of Dunkirk when the Germans entered. Abandoned equipment litters the ground.





HEROIC REARGUARD MADE PRISONERS

Above, French prisoners of war are being marched away from the beaches of Dunkirk to a German internment camp. They formed part of the heroic rearguard which covered the evacuation of the Allies. Their heroism led to capture, but fortunately many of them, as can be seen, did not lose their lives.

Photo, Associated Press

superior quality of British airmen and their machines was one of the most heartening of the lessons taught by the Dunkirk evacuation. No trick of German propaganda could conceal the significance of the victory that arose phoenix-like from the ashes of disaster. (The story of this aspect of the operations is told in a later chapter devoted to the Air War.) As early as June 1 the "New York Herald-Tribune" published a summary of our "case" far more cogent and concise than the British Ministry of Information had ever shown itself capable of. The message was from the journal's military correspondent, and said:

"It has been three days since the Germans proclaimed the destruction of the Allied armies to be a matter of a few hours; it has been a week since the German official communiqué was brushing aside evacuation by sea with the confident remark, 'Our dive-bombers will take care of that.'

"But the evacuation proceeds and the dive-bombers are not taking care of it, though they are trying very hard. The German Air Force has not been able to stop the withdrawal, because it is being adequately opposed. In Norway, as in Poland, the German Air Force accomplished wonders because it had no opposition worthy of the name."

And, dealing with the deeper moral of the situation, a leading article on the same day in the "New York Times" stated:

"So long as the English tongue survives, the word Dunkirk will be spoken with reverence. In that harbour—such a hell as never blazed on earth before—at the end of a lost battle the rags and blemishes that had hidden the soul of democracy fell away. There, beaten but unconquered, in shining splendour, she faced the enemy, this shining thing in the souls of free men which Hitler cannot command. It is the great tradition of democracy. It is the future. It is victory."

Certainly the ultimate goal of the blitzkrieg, the subjugation of Britain, had failed for the time being at least. Time was still on the side of the British Empire, and was still the remorseless enemy of Hitler's land-locked machinery of destruction.

The success of the evacuation and much of its strategic promise for the future depended on the Royal Air Force. The operation as a whole had been a magnificent example of co-operation between naval, air and land forces, sustained with skill and courage; nevertheless, the destruction of the enemy's hopes was due to the fact that the R.A.F. proved itself everywhere superior to the German Air Force, and this in spite of the numerical preponderance of the Nazis.

The German communiqués made their usual fantastic statements, claiming to have inflicted great losses on the R.A.F. as well as on Allied shipping, but the truth was well established by June 4 that at least four German 'planes had been shot down for every British one lost. On some days the enemy losses were far heavier than they could afford, and explained the Luftwaffe's utter failure to fulfil the task allotted to it.

During Saturday, June 1, for example, R.A.F. fighters destroyed or severely damaged 78 German bombers and fighters over the Dunkirk area. The German losses during a week averaged more than 50 'planes a day. A squadron of the new Defiant fighter 'planes shot down 37 enemy machines in one day, without loss.

Heavy Nazi Air Losses

The official figure for British air losses from May 10 to June 1 was announced as 302 'planes. It was also estimated that the Germans had certainly lost about 3,000 'planes since the previous September, and probably more. While the enemy's numerical preponderance was being worn down the R.A.F.'s superior quality (so convincingly demonstrated at Dunkirk) was the means of inflicting far heavier damage by bombing stores, aerodromes, communications, and factories than anything the German Air Force had achieved against real opposition. Though the loss of the Channel ports was a natural cause of anxiety in Britain, the strategic lessons of the successful evacuation gave equally strong reasons for disquiet in Germany.

Diary of the War

MAY, 1940

May 1, 1940. War Office states that at Narvik areas occupied by Allied forces have been extended. British troops near Dombaas have withdrawn. Norwegians claim to have recaptured Roeros and Toonset. R.A.F. attack aerodromes at Stavanger, Fornebu and Aalborg. Minesweeper "Dunoon" reported sunk by mine.

May 2. Announced that Allied troops south of Trondheim have been embarked at Aandalsnes. Submarines "Tarpon" and "Sterlet" overdue and presumed lost. Sloop "Bittern" reported lost. R.A.F. again bomb Stavanger and other aerodromes.

May 3. Announced that Allied forces have been evacuated from Namsos without loss. R.A.F. bomb Stavanger, Fornebu and Danish airfield at Ry, North Jutland.

May 4. Allied guns shelling Narvik from land and sea. Two attacks by Nazi raiders on S.E. coast of England beaten off by R.A.F. and shore defences.

May 5. Operations continue at Narvik. Fortress of Hegra reported to have surrendered. Norwegian Foreign Minister and Minister of Defence arrive in London to confer with Government.

May 6. Desperate resistance of Norwegian troops north of Roeros against Germans advancing from Stoeren. Three Allied destroyers, H.M.S. "Afridi," French "Bison," and Polish "Grom," reported sunk by enemy aircraft off Norway. Three British trawlers, "Penn," "Hercules" and "Leonora," overdue and presumed lost.

May 7. Germans admit that Allied pressure on Narvik has increased. All leave stopped in Holland and coastal defences strengthened. British collier "Brighton" sunk off Dunkirk.

May 8. Government criticized in both Houses of Parliament on conduct of Norwegian campaign. As result of a division Government has majority of 81. Six naval trawlers reported lost off Norway.

May 9. Germans retreating north and north-east of Narvik before Allied and Norwegian pressure. R.A.F. shoot down two Nazi 'planes off N.E. Scotland. Dutch Government orders closing of all canal locks in Amsterdam area.

May 10. Germany invades Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg at dawn. Parachute troops land, especially around Rotterdam. Dutch forces hold enemy at Delfzyl in north, and along Yssel and Maas defence lines, where they blow up bridges. Enemy cross Belgian frontier at four points. Bombing raids on many towns, including Brussels and Antwerp. Sharp fighting in Luxemburg. Allied troops cross into Belgium along front from North Sea to Moselle. R.A.F. very active against enemy aircraft, aerodromes and communications. Mr. Chamberlain resigns and Mr. Churchill succeeds him as Premier. Enemy raiders drop bombs in Kent. British troops land in Iceland. German troopship mined in the Sound.

May 11. Germans stated to have crossed Yssel near Arnheim. Big battle in progress at Rotterdam. French troops in contact with enemy west of Moselle. Heavy Nazi attack in Maastricht district. Enemy cross Albert Canal, advance to outskirts of Tongres and reach Waremme. R.A.F. deliver series of attacks on German troops in Belgium, and Rhineland aerodromes and railway junctions. Mr. Churchill sets up War Cabinet of five members.

May 12. Germans stated to have crossed Meuse in Dutch province of Limburg and penetrated into Belgium, but to have been repulsed at Hasselt. Pressure continues west of Maastricht and in the region of Tongres. Enemy attacks French positions near Forbach. H.M. submarine "Seal" overdue and considered lost.

May 13. Dutch forces, after delaying Germans at Yssel River for 48 hours, withdraw to flooded zone. Germans cross Groningen and Friesland. In south enemy reaches Langstraat and then Moerdyk Bridge. Belgian armies on Meuse and Albert Canal fall back on second line of defence. Great mechanized battle taking place near St. Trond. Dutch Royal Family arrive in London.

May 14. Enemy having recaptured Rotterdam, Dutch High Command orders fighting to cease, except in Zeeland. Battle of Meuse continues along 120-mile front. Enemy spread fanwise through broken defences at Maastricht. Heavy attacks between Namur and Givet, in Sedan sector and between Longwy and Montmédy. Dutch Government remove to London. L.D.V. force initiated.

May 15. Enemy cross Meuse between Mézières and Namur. Salient driven into French lines near Sedan. Germans occupy The Hague, Amsterdam and other Dutch cities. H.M. destroyer "Valentine" reported beached off Dutch coast.

May 16. R.A.F. make heavy night attack on communications east of Rhine. Heavy fighting between Gembloux and Namur. Allied forces converging on Narvik occupy two villages north of fjord.

May 17. B.E.F. reported to have withdrawn to positions west of Brussels. Germans enter Brussels after capturing Louvain and Malines. Massive attack develops between Sambre and Meuse. Heavy fighting on front from Sedan to Rethel. R.A.F. again raid Western Germany. Dutch islands of Walcheren and Beveland in Zeeland evacuated. Belgian liner "Ville de Bruges" sunk by bombing.

May 18. Fighting continues in regions of Avesnes and Vervins, chiefly round Guise and Landrecies. R.A.F. continue operations in Belgium, France and Western Germany.

May 19. Main fighting north of St. Quentin and in region of Montmédy. Weygand succeeds Gamelin as C.-in-C. R.A.F. continue attacks on enemy communications in France and Belgium, and oil depots in N.W. Germany.

May 20. German pressure continues from St. Quentin towards Channel ports. Heavy fighting east of Cambrai. Germans capture Laon. Enemy repulsed near Rethel and south of River Scarpe. R.A.F. fire oil tanks at Rotterdam. H.M. destroyer "Whitley" reported damaged by bombs and beached.

May 21. Enemy forces reach Amiens and Arras. Germans also claim to be in Abbeville and to have defeated French Ninth Army. H.M. cruiser "Effingham" reported lost and minelayer "Princess Victoria" mined.

May 22. British forces counter-attack between Arras and Douai. Heavy fighting in progress between Valenciennes and Cambrai. H.M. trawler "Rifsnes" reported sunk by bombs.

May 23. Abbeville in enemy hands and heavy fighting around and in Boulogne. Fierce fighting in Arras sector. Germans cross Scheldt at Oudenarde; Allied forces withdraw behind River Lys. R.A.F. bombers attack objectives in Meuse sector, at Namur and north of Aisne. Power station near Leipzig bombed. Sir Oswald Mosley and other Fascists arrested.

May 24. Violent fighting continues between Valenciennes, Cambrai and Arras. British troops withdraw from Boulogne. Germans claim capture of Tournai and Ghent. R.A.F. bomb communications in Rhineland.

May 25. Hard fighting continues in Boulogne. Coastal Command aircraft bomb oil tanks at Rotterdam. Enemy aircraft drop bombs during night in North Riding and East Anglia.

May 26. Enemy launch strong offensive against Belgian forces on left flank of Allies. Germans occupy Boulogne, French still holding citadel. H.M. destroyer "Wessex" and trawler "Charles Boyes" reported sunk.

May 27. Violent fighting continues near Courtrai. French forces retire from Valenciennes. Belgians at Courtrai give ground towards Menin. British troops at Aire attack flank of enemy making for Calais. East of Aisne Germans attack persistently.

May 28. Belgian Army surrenders by order of King Leopold. Belgian Government repudiate his decision. Narvik captured by Allied forces. H.M. trawlers "Melbourne" and "Cape Passaro" sunk.

May 29. Allied armies fighting desperate rearguard action towards coast. Strong naval and air forces defending port of Dunkirk. Germans claim capture of Ostend, Lille, and Ypres.

May 30. Fighting retreat of B.E.F. and French forces continues. Evacuation from Dunkirk begins. War Office announces that heroic stand of British garrison at Calais has been invaluable. Destroyers "Grafton," "Grenade" and "Wakeful" reported sunk off France, as well as transport "Abukir."

May 31. Evacuation proceeding. French recapture part of Abbeville. British warship "Curlew" reported sunk.

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TRUMPET CALLS AS THE BATTLE OF FRANCE BEGAN

Less than twenty-four hours after the Dunkirk evacuation was completed Germany launched a new offensive along the Somme and Aisne. Below we give two of General Weygand's Orders of the Day to his Army, Hitler's addresses to his soldiers and to the German people, and a notable broadcast by M. Reynaud to the French nation at the beginning of the greatest battle in history.

GEN. WEYGAND, IN AN ORDER OF THE DAY, JUNE 5, 1940:

THE battle of France has started. The order is to defend our positions without thought of withdrawal. Officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the French Army, let the thought of our Fatherland, wounded by the invaders, inspire you with unshakable resolution to hold on where you are. The examples of our glorious past show that courage and determination always gain the day.

Hold on to the soil of France. Look only forward. The High Command has made its preparations in order to support you from the rear. The fate of our Fatherland, the maintenance of our liberty, and the future of our sons depend on your steadfastness.

HITLER, IN AN ORDER OF THE DAY TO THE GERMAN ARMY, JUNE 5, 1940:

TODAY another great battle begins on the Western Front. You will be joined by countless new German divisions who will meet the enemy for the first time and will defeat them. This fight for the freedom and existence of our people now and in the future will be continued until the enemy rulers in London and Paris, who still believe in carrying on the war as the best means of realizing their destructive plans, are annihilated. Our victory will teach them a lesson which will go down in history. The thoughts of the whole of Germany are with you.

HITLER, IN A PROCLAMATION TO THE GERMAN PEOPLE, JUNE 5, 1940:

PEOPLE of Germany! The greatest battle of all time has been brought to a victorious conclusion by our soldiers. In a few weeks we have taken more than 1,200,000 prisoners. Holland and Belgium have surrendered. The greater part of the British Expeditionary Force has been annihilated, taken prisoner, or forced to flee from the Continent. Three French armies have ceased to exist. Thus the danger of an invasion of the Ruhr territory has been definitely averted.

People of Germany! It is your soldiers who have accomplished this glorious task. I therefore order that flags be flown for eight days from today onwards in honour of our soldiers. I further order the ringing of bells for three days. May their ringing accompany the prayers which the German people will continue to offer for their sons because this morning the German divisions and air units have been assigned new tasks in the fight for the freedom and future of our people.

Greater Germany dominates the air, sea, and coasts of the North Sea and Channel. As our enemies still reject peace, they shall have war of total annihilation.

M. PAUL REYNAUD, PRIME MINISTER OF FRANCE, IN A BROADCAST TO THE FRENCH NATION, JUNE 6, 1940:

GERMANY has launched herself against us with her usual brutality by three separate thrusts. The first was when German propaganda announced that the Allied Armies which had gone to fight in Belgium had been encircled and would be annihilated. They were to be cut off from the sea, deprived of munitions and of provisions, and the world would witness a capitulation without precedent in history. In face of the impossibility of repairing this vast loss of fighters the morale of the Allies would be crushed.

The ring of steel was, however, never closed, and 335,000 Allied soldiers were embarked at Dunkirk, teaching Germany the significance of mastery over the seas. Far from breaking up, the morale of our troops and of our country revealed itself equal to the strain and worthy of our ancestors. The heroism of the battle of Flanders and of the rearguard fight before Dunkirk has already gone down in history. . . .

The second German enterprise was aimed at breaking the morale of Paris. Last Monday Hitler organized a spectacular raid on the capital. He employed hundreds of bombers and fighters. What were the objectives? That is of little importance because everybody knows, and he knows, that, with the inaccurate bombing, women, children and old people were hit. Did all this disturb Paris? Not for a second. Some minutes after the bombardment I saw on the spot the proud faces of our working men and women, of the people of Paris who do not know how to tremble. We know now that what appeared to be a colossal raid was nothing to the soul of Paris. . . .

The third German enterprise, and the most decisive one, is the one we witness today. It is the battle for France. It is an attack in grand style preceded by a proclamation by Hitler to his troops. All the means which we know have been put into operation. Aircraft and armoured divisions are once more attempting an infiltration and a break-through of our front. The battle has hardly commenced and I shall tell you nothing but what General Weygand has told me.

"I am satisfied," he said, "with the manner in which the battle has begun and the manner in which my orders for resistance at any price are being executed. . . ."

Since the beginning of the battle hundreds of enemy tanks have been destroyed and Allied aviation is supporting the action of our troops. All the world watches breathlessly the development of this battle, because the battle of June, 1940, will decide its fate, as Hitler has said, perhaps for centuries.

What is the risk which must be realized in Europe and outside Europe? Today all the world knows: it is a regime of oppression, where men who are not Germans play but the role of slaves. The new world announced by Hitler in his proclamation may begin perhaps by trickery; but soon enough will follow orders, bullying, smacks in the faces of the workers, the moral and physical destruction of the élite. It would be the Middle Ages again, which would not be illuminated by the mercy of Christ.

This dream of German hegemony will be smashed against the French resistance, because the France which is standing up today against Hitler is not the France of the period between the two wars. It is another France, just as the Britain which is fighting Hitler is not the Britain of the last twenty years. We, the French of June, 1940, have but one thought—to save France. All the members of the Government are animated by a common will—to conquer. We will not lose our time when the country is in danger on debates on responsibility. We will not weaken France by dividing her. . . .

Let the spectators of the drama of the battle of France understand, and understand quickly, that the stake is immense and time is measured. As for us, more than ever we have confidence in our arms.

GENERAL WEYGAND, IN AN ORDER OF THE DAY, JUNE 9:

THE German offensive has now been unleashed on the whole front, from the sea to Montmédy. Tomorrow it will stretch as far as Switzerland. The order still is for each man to fight without thought of retreat, looking straight ahead of him where the command has placed him. The Commander-in-Chief is not unaware of the valiant efforts of which the armies engaged and the Air Force are giving a magnificent example. He thanks them for their efforts. France demands still more.

Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, the safety of our country requires of you not only your courage but all the resolution, initiative and fighting spirit of which you are capable. The enemy has suffered considerable losses. He will soon reach the end of his effort. We have now reached the last quarter of the hour. Hold fast.

Chapter 91

THE BATTLE OF FRANCE OPENS: SIX FATEFUL DAYS

Weygand's Line—Anti-Tank Defence in Depth—Battle of the Somme Begins—Onslaught by German Armoured Divisions—Highlanders on the Allied Left Flank—Germans Reach the Aisne—Mass Attack Between Aumale and Noyon—French Abandon the Line of the Somme—Enemy Columns on the Outskirts of Rouen—With the British on the Left of the Line—Bombing of Paris

WHILE the great retreat to Dunkirk continued (*see* Chap. 90), while hundreds of thousands of men were successfully evacuated from those beaches which, so the Nazis had hoped and boasted and so their enemies had feared, would be the scene of a surrender unparalleled in military history, the main French armies, under General Weygand, were doing their best to establish themselves on a line which traversed northern France from the estuary of the Somme to the first forts of the Maginot Line proper near Montmédy.

This line presented an almost continuous series of water obstacles, but was without other permanent defences, and time was lacking to construct elaborate works. Moreover, the troops available to hold it were not only numerically insufficient but not always of the best quality, for there were many poorly trained reservists. A great part of the French army had been already lost in the Flanders disaster; another large section was facing Italy, and yet another pinned to the rigid Maginot Line.

The Weygand Line

By June 2 Weygand had completed his dispositions in contact with the advanced elements of the German Army, whose main forces were rushing south intent on leaving no breathing space for French recovery. From the Channel coast the zone of contact followed the Somme from its estuary near Abbeville to Amiens. Along its lower reaches the French continued to hold certain bridgeheads on the northern bank of the river, but at Amiens the position was reversed, for the Germans had consolidated their hold on a little pocket of territory south of the river. From Amiens the French positions followed the left bank of the Upper Somme to Péronne and Ham; thence the zone followed the Crozat Canal to the Upper Oise, near La Fère. Again a few miles, and it ran along the southern bank of the Ailette Canal connecting the Oise and the Aisne, and thence along the south bank of the Aisne past the Chemin des Dames to Neufchâtel and Rethel to Attigny. Here it left the river and swept across country beyond the Meuse to Montmédy, where it made contact with the Maginot Line, still intact to the Swiss frontier.

Along this line the French had the following forces: between the coast and Montmédy, 43 infantry divisions (many of them weak), 3 armoured divisions of which two were deficient in tanks, and 3 poorly armed cavalry divisions. Between Montmédy and the Swiss frontier were 17 fortress divisions.

Battle of the Somme

In the early hours of June 5 the Battle of the Somme opened with a tremendous German onslaught at various points on the 120-mile front between the Channel and the Laon-Soissons road, seeking or attempting to form points of weakness in the French positions. The French defences were blasted by hurricane artillery bombardment, followed by concentrated attacks of dive-bombers, before the masses of German infantry went over the top. Late in the afternoon a number of tanks were thrown into the battle. The communiqué issued in Paris that night reported that: "The battle which began this morning has become more intense in the region of Amiens, Péronne (at both of which the

THE WEYGAND DEFENCE LINE

The map below shows the Weygand Defence Line at the beginning of the Battle of France on June 5, 1940. The tinted portion denotes territory conquered by the Nazis up to that date. The extent of their advance by June 10 is shown in the map in page 933. By June 14 the Germans had entered Paris, and on June 22 the French delegates signed an armistice with Germany





MISFORTUNE PURSUES PERONNE

By June 5, 1940, the Germans had managed to secure bridgeheads on the Somme in the region of Amiens and Peronne. Péronne, the Grand' Place of which is seen above, looking west, was held by the Germans in the previous war until March 18, 1917, and again from March 24 to September 1, 1918. It was largely rebuilt, but was again damaged in 1940.

Photo, A. J. Insall

Germans had already secured bridgeheads), and the Ailette Canal. The enemy has brought into action important forces, particularly tanks and aircraft. On the whole these attacks have been held. Our troops even when passed by the tanks resist energetically at the points of support occupied by them and maintain their positions." The main attack had been delivered from the Somme bridgehead south of Péronne, which the Germans had captured on May 18.

The points of support (points d'appui) mentioned in the communiqué referred to the new anti-tank defences for which General Weygand was given the credit. Instead of the lines of trenches, buttressed here and there by concrete strong-points, that were normal in the battles of the Somme of 1916 and 1918, in this new battle French defences consisted of hastily fortified points of support, generally villages, solidly held and spaced in depth. It was realized, indeed expected, that some at least of the attackers' tanks would penetrate between the points, but it was held that such infiltration would be to little purpose, for the German infantry and the supply columns bringing petrol and ammunition would be unable to follow in view of the fierce fire which would be brought to bear against them from either flank. To complete the defence system, however, mobile reserves to finish off the infiltrating hordes were required, and these were lacking.

Defence in Depth

Owing to difficulty in getting munitions and food to the points of support they were in most cases quickly overrun, while the French reserves were insufficient to allow vigorous counter-attacks on enemy tanks that had penetrated between the strong-points. Thus the defence broke down mainly because of French inferiority in men and armament in the threatened sectors. By night the Somme had been abandoned from Amiens to the coast; panzer columns had reached Roye and Moreuil.

On the next day, June 6, the onslaught on the front from Abbeville to the Aisne was renewed with furious intensity. As on the first day, the artillery fire and the air bombardment were terrific, but the Germans threw into the battle a very much larger number of tanks; more than 2,000 were estimated to have been engaged in groups of 200 to 300 at a time, and although the leaders were exposed to the intense fire put up by the French guns and cannon-firing 'planes, so that several hundreds were destroyed, hundreds more lumbered up to take their places in the battle.

The speed with which the Germans organized these attacks was amazing, and testified to the efficiency of their Staff and administration service. On the other side that night's French communiqué ran, "Our divisions have fought magnificently, clinging to the strong-points; battalions, companies, platoons and batteries faced up to the onslaught of the tanks, smothering them with their fire. Our aviation worked for all it was worth, and, attacking the armoured vehicles with bombs and guns, supported without respite our infantry and artillery." Yet it was admitted that in the course of this unprecedented onslaught by the armoured masses of the enemy certain of the French units had been submerged and outflanked, particularly in the region of the Ailette, where enemy detachments pushed forward until they reached the heights bordering the right bank of the Aisne.

French Fight Magnificently

The French 2nd Army had to re-form on the left bank of the Aisne. From Amiens to the sea the defence line gave way. In the region of the Lower Somme enemy elements succeeded in penetrating and infiltrating as far as the little river Bresle.

It was here on the extreme left flank of the Allied line that British troops,



HISTORIC TOWN OF ABBEVILLE

Abbeville was the scene of fierce fighting during the early days of June, 1940, and was severely damaged by air bombardment. This historic town was a British base during the war of 1914–18, but suffered little damage, though occasionally bombed. Here is the Place Courbet and the 15th-century Cathedral of S. Vulfran.

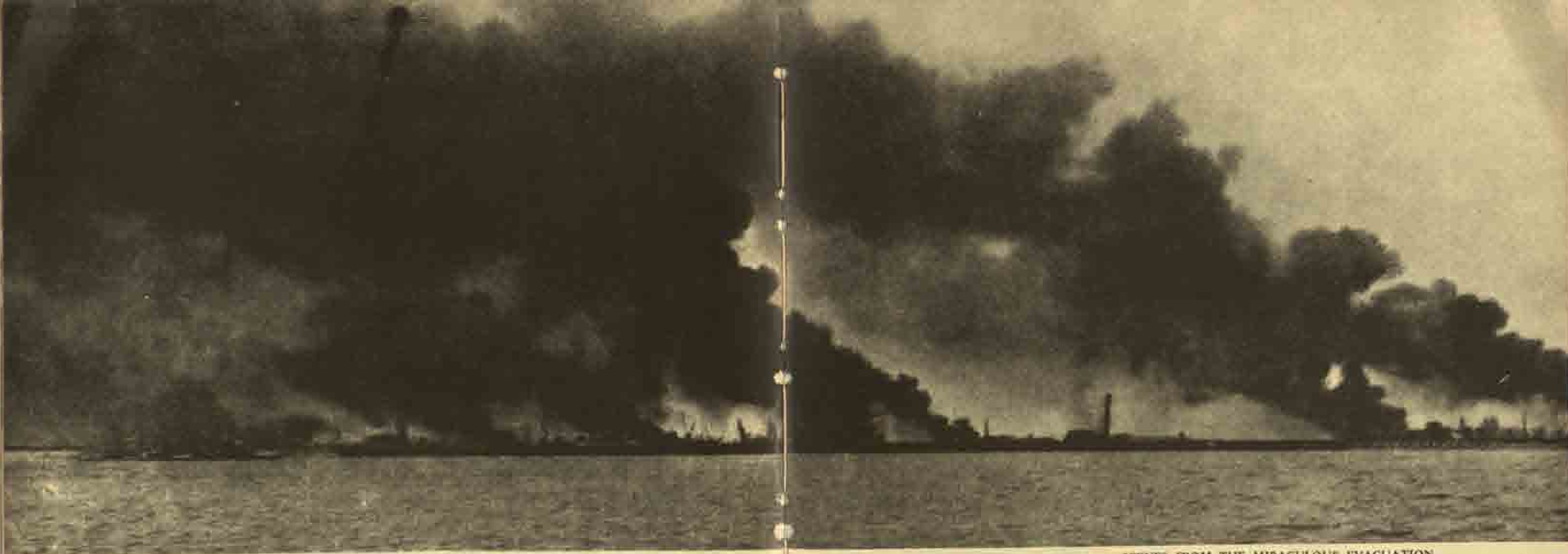
Photo, G. MacCormack



THEY WERE UP TO THEIR NECKS AT DUNKIRK

Luckily the sea was calm on the whole during the evacuation of the B.E.F. from Dunkirk, and, as this photograph shows, many of the men were able to wade out from the shore to the vessels waiting for them, forming a human chain from the sandy beach to the ship's side

Photo, G.P.U.



SCENES FROM THE MIRACULOUS EVACUATION

The remarkable photograph above shows Dunkirk in flames after incessant German shelling and air bombardment during the withdrawal of the B.E.F. A rescue ship which has been hit is seen on the left. Below left, British soldiers on the Dunkirk beaches shooting at Nazi aircraft while bombs burst around them. Below, British and French troops waiting on the beaches to be taken aboard the rescue ships.

Photos: "News Chronicle"; Fox; Sport & General







SAFELY BACK IN A BRITISH PORT

After eventful days these men of the B.E.F. have arrived home from Dunkirk, safely escorted by units of the Royal Navy. Despite the fact that nearly 1,700 Allied vessels took part in the evacuation, in the narrowest part of the Channel, by day and night, the losses in ships were remarkably small

Photo. British Official: Crown Copyright



EASY TARGET FOR THE LUFTWAFFE

The German air force was able to make good use of its immense numerical superiority in the early days of the blitzkrieg. The German aerial photograph above shows a French town being bombed by Nazi aircraft.

Photo, "Die Wehrmacht," Berlin

been put into operation. Aircraft and armoured divisions are once more attempting an infiltration and a break-through of our front. But the battle has hardly commenced, and I shall tell you nothing but what General Weygand has told me: 'I am satisfied,' he said, 'with the manner in which the battle has begun and the manner in which my orders for resistance at any price are being executed.'" He concluded on a grave note: "Let all spectators of the drama of the Battle of France understand, and understand quickly, that the stakes are immense. Time is passing. As for us, more than ever we have confidence in our armies and in final victory."

But there seemed little justification for the optimism of Reynaud or Weygand. Actually, on the third day (June 7) of the gigantic battle, the entire Somme front went to pieces. During the night the Germans had brought up a host of reinforcements, and as the fight developed new masses were thrown into the attack along the whole front. Once again, too, the German tanks were much in evidence. Although the French strong points

Attack En Masse

principally the 51st (Highland) Division, were furiously engaged—as, indeed, they had been for several days earlier—in an attempt to prevent the Germans from extending their hold on the Somme bridgeheads. Although surrounded by the enemy masses, the Highlanders fought with characteristic tenacity, living up to their division's great reputation for toughness and courage. So heavy was the pressure that at certain points it became necessary to withdraw the line, but every inch of ground was bitterly contested. In blazing sunshine, in almost tropical heat, the men fought on, many of them in their shirt sleeves; "they just shake themselves and laugh," said their general after one of the periodical tornadoes of heavy artillery and machine-gun fire. (*See* Chapter 149.)

When M. Reynaud went to the microphone that night he declared that he came not as the bearer of bad news, as on May 21, when he announced that the Germans had reached Amiens, and on May 28, when he told of the capitulation of King Leopold. "Today, in an hour which remains grave, I have come to give you reasons for hope—not words, but facts. . . . It was Germany's most decisive enterprise," he said, "an attack in grand style. All the means which we know of have

Reynaud's Hopes



CLOSING THE ROAD TO NAZI TRAFFIC

Here is a photograph taken on the Somme battlefield at the beginning of June, 1940. It shows British soldiers erecting a substantial anti-tank barrier across a French road in an endeavour to delay the swift advance of the German mechanized units.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



ONE CLUE TO THE FRENCH COLLAPSE

The official French photograph above, showing motorized units of the French army mounted on vehicles which would have been considered obsolete during the war of 1914–18, provides one clue to the sudden collapse of the French army in 1940. Below, a German photograph showing the capture of a French medium tank.

Photos, Section Cinéma de l'Armée; Keystone



took a heavy toll of the enemy, many of them were isolated or swept away as the battle passed on its course. Already the German High Command had given out that "the Weygand Line has been pierced along the whole front," and it was claimed that the stubborn resistance offered by the French troops had been unable to stem the vigorous attack of the German right wing on the Somme.

Particularly fierce were the German attacks against the French right wing in the sector to the north and east of Soissons, and at some points the enemy after crossing the Ailette reached the banks of the Aisne. Several detachments, indeed, managed to get across the river, but the French claimed that all the enemy elements which penetrated to the left bank were annihilated. Another fierce attack was directed south of Péronne, where the French strong points were assaulted by two Panzerdivisionen said to comprise nearly a thousand tanks. A nine-mile breach was made in the French line between Hornoy and Poix; many of the tanks succeeded in sweeping through the defences, and headed in the direction of Rouen. The German infantry, however, who attempted to support them in mass formation, made little progress. On the west near Abbeville fierce fighting continued, and a number of British tanks were thrown into the battle in an effort to stem the German advance south of the Somme. The French 10th Army (between Aumale and the coast) was cut in two and driven back westward. Near Soissons the enemy crossed the Aisne.

Weygand's Order of the Day

It was on this day that General Weygand's Order of the Day was made public. "The battle for France has begun," it said. "The order is to defend our positions without thought of retirement. Officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the French Army, let the thought of our Fatherland, wounded by the invader, inspire you with the unshakable resolution to hold fast where you are. Examples drawn from our glorious past show that courage and determination always gain the day. Hang on to the soil of France. Look only forward; the High Command has made its preparations in order to support you from the rear. The fate of our 'Patrie,' the safeguarding of our liberties and the future of our sons depend on your steadfastness."

On the next day, June 8, the battle continued throughout the day on the whole front between the sea and the Chemin des Dames, but the Germans concentrated their main efforts on a



BORDER REGIMENT ON THE SOMME FRONT

These photographs from the Somme battlefront show men of the 4th Border Regiment during the Battle of France in June, 1940. Cut off from the main body of the B.E.F., they commandeered vehicles and made themselves into a motorised unit. Above they are seen arriving in a front-line sector in lorries. Below, taking up a position by the roadside.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright





BLITZKRIEG FROM THE NAZI VIEWPOINT

These vivid scenes are German front-line pictures of the Battle of France. Above, a Nazi reconnaissance patrol advances cautiously, with rifles and grenades ready, through the French village of Ham, remembered by many men of the B.E.F. of 1916-17. Below, a big German tank awaits the arrival of the sappers before it can proceed across the river which runs through a devastated French town.

Photos, Keystone



60-mile front between Aumale, 20 miles south of Abbeville, and Noyon, 27 miles south of Péronne. Report spoke of seven armoured divisions and 20 fresh infantry divisions being employed by the enemy in his onslaught, making a total of 300,000 men, and it was hardly surprising that at the close of the day the French military spokesman in Paris spoke of a "slight strategic withdrawal"—words which cloaked what was in effect an abandonment of the entire line of the Somme. The French communiqué said that enemy infantry divisions which had hitherto remained in the rear had now entered the line and, reinforced by powerful artillery, had added their fire power to that of the armoured divisions already engaged. "Our divisions have succeeded in limiting the progress of this disproportionate effort with their own effectives, which are making a withdrawal manoeuvre in the prescribed directions."

The French 10th Army suffered fresh defeats; some of its units were taken prisoner at St. Valery-en-Caux (see pages 954 and 1563), while others (on the right flank) retired to the Oise near Pontoise. To the east of the Oise enemy pressure was also accentuated, and there, too, fresh divisions, supported by armoured units, enabled the enemy to make considerable progress, including a foothold on the heights south of the Aisne. Thus it was admitted that the Aisne, too, had proved an insufficient bar to the German advance.

The fighting on the next day, Sunday, June 9, was said to be the most intense in the "greatest battle in history," and for the most part it seemed that it had gone in favour of the French. It was officially claimed in Paris that a thousand German tanks had been destroyed in the preceding five days of battle, and that the losses inflicted on the German attackers totalled some 400,000. The communiqué spoke of diminishing enemy pressure on the Bresle, although there was the significant admission that the enemy armoured units, numbering perhaps 200 machines, had not only reached Forges-les-Eaux, between Dieppe and Beauvais, but had made their appearance in the region of Rouen; indeed, they had actually reached the outskirts of the old Norman capital, and at Pont de l'Arche, a few miles upstream, they had endeavoured, although so far in vain, to cross the Seine. Farther east between Montdidier and Noyon it was stated that the enemy had been much less successful, and it was claimed that in Champagne an attack which the enemy had launched at dawn on a front between Château Porcien and the Argonne had been completely stemmed. But the enemy offensive on either side of Rethel was so far successful that a bridgehead was won on the right. Whenever occasion offered the French had counter-attacked, but it could not be denied that they were placed in a position of deadly peril.

All through that terrific week the British on the left fought magnificently. "If any army has ever pulled its weight in a really desperate battle against great odds our men of the 'little B.E.F.,'" telegraphed "Eye-witness" from his post with the British Army in France on June 10, "have done it. They have fought for days in intense heat against overwhelming forces under a hail of bombs from machines shrieking downwards at over 300 miles an hour. They have been swept again and again and again by a storm of machine-gun bullets from the air. Tanks have harried them from front and rear. Shells from every type of weapon, from heavy artillery to trench mortars, have crashed round them. Machine-gun and rifle fire from the infantry have been only incidentals.

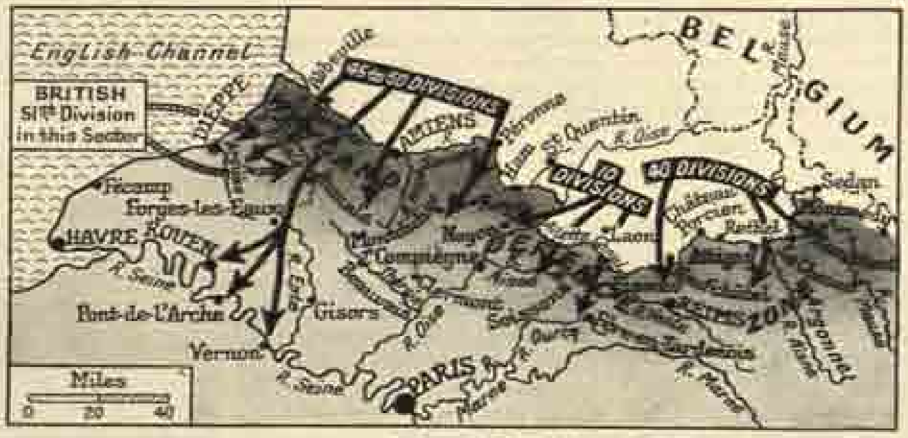
"At some places the Germans have launched infantry in such masses that our men have become physically fatigued



FORGES-LES-EAUX

Forges-les-Eaux, a village on the Amiens-Rouen road (above), was the point from which the Nazis directed the thrust of their armoured units towards the Rouen region

Photo, E.N.A.



WHERE THE NAZIS STRUCK

This map of the Weygand Defence Zone shows the main points from which the Germans developed their offensive between Sedan and the Channel during the Battle of France. Compare with map in page 923

PONT DE L'ARCHE

The old Norman village of Pont de l'Arche, of which the picturesque Rue de l'Abbaye Sans Toile is seen below, was the scene of heavy fighting during the Battle of France in June, 1940.

Photo, E.N.A.







SIGNS AND SYMBOLS OF SACRIFICE

Rethel, a French town which figured in the Champagne battles of the war of 1914–18, was destroyed by the Germans in June, 1940, during the Battle of France. Above, a scene in one of the streets of the town. Right, a photograph wirelessed from Berlin to New York, showing Hitler and General Keitel at the Canadian War Memorial, Vimy Ridge, after the fall of Northern France.

Photos, Associated Press; Keystone

with the effort of continually firing—their rifles and machine-guns have become almost red-hot. Through all this terrific ordeal they have stuck to it splendidly.

"Today, their faces black with a week's beard and dust caked on sweating skin, they are still grinning, still ready to make another stand. From youngest to oldest they have shown supreme courage and endurance. Men from all parts of the country have fought in these fierce battles with dogged pluck. Those who have distinguished themselves include men from every area north of the Tweed, Highlanders and Lowlanders alike. Townsmen from Glasgow and Edinburgh and Aberdeen, Perth fishermen from the North Sea coast, crofters from the Highlands and remote hamlets of the Western Isles—all have fought with characteristic Scots bravery and kept their characteristic Scots philosophy and good humour."

Tribute to the B.E.F.

On the day before, continued "Eye-witness," the British troops had fought fierce rearguard actions against the steadily advancing German tanks and infantry. They had been driven back by greatly superior forces, yet they held their positions tenaciously until the order to withdraw was given.

Again General Weygand spoke to his soldiers in an Order of the Day, issued on that same Sunday, June 9. He said:

"The German offensive has now been launched on the whole front from the sea to Montmédy. Tomorrow it will stretch as far as Switzerland. The order still is for each man to fight without thought of retreat, looking straight ahead from where the Command has placed him. The Commander-in-Chief is fully aware of the valiant efforts of which the armies engaged and the Air Force are giving a magnificent example. I thank them. France demands still more of them. Officers, non-commissioned officers and men, the very safety of 'la Patrie' demands of you not only your courage but all the resolution, initiative and fighting spirit of which you are capable. The enemy has suffered considerable losses. He will soon reach the end of his effort. We have now reached the last quarter of the hour. Hold fast."

Hold fast! But how difficult it was to "tenir bon" in the circumstances in which the French armies found themselves on that critical Monday! This was the day that Mussolini chose to declare war. From the sea to the Oise the Germans continued their pressure; they crossed the Lower Seine at Vernon, south-east of Rouen, and at other places; through the terrible gaps at Abbeville, Amiens and Péronne an uncounted host of tanks plunged to engage in an orgy of destruction along the Aisne, east of Soissons; and in the direction of Rheims they continued their attack. From the bridgehead gained at Rethel the enemy launched a big attack with tanks on June 10. The French 3rd Armoured Division beat off the Panzers, but none the less a withdrawal that night (June 10–11) became imperative, and the French drew back to Rheims. Elsewhere in the line, Villers-Cotterets had been relinquished to the enemy by the French 6th Army, and after forcing the crossing of the Ourcq the Germans got as far as Château Thierry.

Just before he told of Italy's entry into the war, M. Reynaud, in his broadcast of June 10, gave a brief review of the position. "For six days and five nights our soldiers, our airmen, and the Royal Air Force," he said, "have been facing an enemy superior in numbers and armaments. In this war, which is a war of strong points grouped in depth, our armies have been manoeuvring in retreat. They did not abandon any strong point until they had inflicted cruel losses on the enemy." Then, after a scathing denunciation of Mussolini's action, the Premier concluded: "In the course of her long and glorious history France has passed through more severe trials and yet has always astonished the world. France cannot die."

Chapter 92

NAZI AIR TACTICS IN THE LOW COUNTRIES AND IN FRANCE: R.A.F. v. LUFTWAFFE

Air Tactics of the Invasion—The 'Sandwich' Technique—Parachutists and Troop Carriers—Attacks on Refugees—Bombing of Rotterdam—Dive-bombers Against Troops: Preparing the Way for German Armoured Divisions—Work of the R.A.F.: Operational Difficulties in the Retreat—Belgian Capitulation—Saving the B.E.F.—Covering the Evacuation from Dunkirk—Italy Enters the War—The French Collapse—Air Situation Surveyed

Fresh aspects of the scope and influence of air power had been revealed during the Russo-Finnish campaign and during the German campaign in Norway, but it is true to say that a complete view of the function of the aeroplane in modern war did not appear until the invasion of the Low Countries by Germany on May 10.

Norway had indicated that prodigious feats of troop and supply transport were possible to a country well stocked with aircraft. Finland had given some tentative indications of the capabilities of parachute troops. But when the Germans swooped on Holland, air war immediately took on a far bigger scale.

Two major duties were assigned to the Luftwaffe, though both of them contributed to the advance of the land armies: (1) air preparation and support for advancing troops, and (2) simultaneous disorganizing attack from the rear.

Reduced to its simplest form, the German method may be described as a sandwich technique. While pressure was brought to bear in front of the advancing army, the rear of the defending troops and their communications were harassed by parachutists and by troops landed by transport aeroplanes.

The parachute troops were in reality fulfilling the role of cavalry on a much more decisive line. An attack from the front on a certain sector would be preceded by a tremendous dive-bombing onslaught on the main defended positions intended to clear the way for mechanized units, and at the same time the parachute troops would drop behind the defended positions, cut telephone lines, harass supply columns, and even attack directly with small arms the rearguards of the defenders.

Role of Parachute Troops

There can be little doubt that the attack on Rotterdam will be regarded as a classic example of this form of war. Waalhaven aerodrome, Rotterdam's former civil airport, was chosen as the focus of the special air operations, though air operations of a secondary kind were spread over a very wide area.

Amsterdam, for instance, was subjected to heavy and repeated raids, and at the time of the main operations in Holland Royal Air Force aerodromes in France were attacked with the intention of hampering aerial counter-attacks. But it was at Waalhaven that the battle for the rear of the Dutch positions, as it might be called, concentrated.

Parachute troops were rained down there, and troop-carrying aircraft, chiefly of the Junkers 52 type, but also including some four-engined machines of another make, landed. The Germans moved with great speed, and it was their speed that helped them to hold out in spite of intensive raiding by the R.A.F.

For directly Waalhaven was seized strong forces of Royal Air Force bombers attacked it and the German forces assembling there. Many of the German troop-carrying aeroplanes were destroyed on the ground. And the Dutch, in a determined counter-attack, did manage to gain a footing there again. But it was short-lived. The Germans poured in men by air, and secured a grip on the airport which could not be loosed.

The choice of airports as the landing ground for parachute troops has a twofold purpose in that not only is the ground suited to the landing, but it serves automatically as a good base for further operations. Supplies can be landed there as well as reinforcements.

That is why the Germans showed such vigour, both in Norway and in Holland, in their early attacks on aerodromes. They regarded the aerodromes as keys to their subsequent operations. It is probable that the order was to secure Waalhaven at any cost, and that even the landing of 16 Junkers aeroplanes at Valkenburg,



BRITISH AIR CHIEF IN FRANCE

Air Marshal A. S. Barratt (left) was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the British Air Forces in France as from January 9, 1940. Previously the R.A.F. in France had been made up of two separate groups, the Advanced Air Striking Force under Air Vice-Marshal P. H. L. Playfair and the Army Air Component under Air Vice-Marshal C. H. Blount.

Photo, French Official







This British pilot's defiant "trade-mark" speaks for itself. Top centre: Badge of the famous French Stork squadron revived from the last war.

British lion trampling swastika; two Nazi flags "cancelled." Left circle: French Sioux emblem—feathers added for enemy 'planes shot down. Right circle: German.







Mr. Chamberlain's umbrella was a favourite theme in German devices. See above and elsewhere in this page.



Animals, both heraldic and naturalistic, rivalled jeering demons for popularity on other German machines.















HERALDRY OF THE AIR

Among various forms of artistic expression inspired by the war the distinctive insignia adopted by certain pilots and units of the opposing air forces were of sufficient interest to merit record. Some of the emblems were both ingeniously conceived and skilfully executed, and it is notable that among the German designs political motifs predominated and the national love of heraldic display was well in evidence. With the exception of those otherwise described, the examples here given are German.

each one with twenty infantry soldiers, and the attempt to capture Queen Wilhelmina were nothing more than a diversion designed to throw the Dutch rear into still greater confusion.

The Royal Air Force gave the strongest support it could to the Dutch defence; but owing to the fact that the Netherlands' strict interpretation of neutrality prevented any staff talks from taking place before the invasion, the effectiveness of the support was necessarily limited.

But roads and bridges in the Maastricht area were bombed and much damage done to German communications. Many different types of aircraft were used. In the attacks on Waalhaven the new Bristol Beauforts came into action as well as the much older Fairey Swordfish biplanes. The R.A.F. worked incessantly and the German air force suffered its first big losses.

It was on May 14 also that the Dutch Commander-in-Chief ordered his troops to cease fire in all areas except Zeeland. He had been influenced in his decision by the ruthless air bombardment of Rotterdam itself, of Utrecht and other cities. In Rotterdam a selected area near the centre of the city had been systematically bombed by Junkers dive-bombers and the casualties had amounted to the hideous figure of 30,000 dead in the space of half an hour (*see* pages 843-5).

Four days had seen the breaking up of the resistance of the Netherlands forces. Those forces had fought gallantly; but they had been faced with a highly developed and, in some ways, new use of the air arm, and their resistance had been smashed inside and out. The Germans, however, having acquired some impetus in this campaign, did not slacken. On the contrary, they hurled themselves with increased vigour at the junction of the Allied armies, here concentrating their main air strength.

It is instructive to note here a slight modification in their tactics. When they turned upon the main Allied armies, the British, Belgian and French, they did not make use of the sandwich plan. It seems that they recognized that the Allied rear was better defended and that parachute troops would have much greater difficulty in operating than they had in the Netherlands.

Parachute troops were landed here and there behind the Allied lines, but not in great numbers, and they were mostly dealt with easily. It may be also that the operations of such troops were checked at the source by the intensive bombing attacks of the Royal Air Force.

Road and rail communications in the Low Countries and in Luxemburg were heavily bombed, and May 16 saw the weightiest offensive yet launched by the British air forces. German fuel supplies were also attacked. The French Armée de l'Air cooperated well, especially in the Meuse operations.

Biggest R.A.F. Offensive

But again the German method showed signs of prevailing. Clouds of the Junkers 87 dive-bombers, aircraft of no very advanced performance characteristics, but solidly built and capable of being turned out in large numbers, prepared the way for the advances of the German armoured divisions.

They swooped on the defences and either destroyed them or forced those manning them to take cover. Immediately the German tanks swept





BEAUFORTS DROP THEIR BOMBS

Above are a Beaufort bomber and R.A.F. pilots at a West Country aerodrome. Aircraft of this type wrought havoc on the Waalhaven aerodrome at Rotterdam while the Germans were in possession, as can be seen in the photograph, right.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Fox

Another feature of the German war method emerged during this period. It concerned the military use of refugees. M. Pierlot, the Belgian Prime Minister, stated on May 14 that refugees had been machine-gunned by low-flying German aeroplanes. Later it became clear that the German plan was to choke the roads behind the Allied forces with fleeing refugees and to do what they could among these refugees to create panic, the ulterior object being to hamper military movements.



ABBEVILLE AERODROME RECEIVES A VISIT

Here is evidence of R.A.F. activity at Abbeville aerodrome after it had fallen into German hands. Bombs can be seen bursting all over the landing ground and among the hangars near the cross-roads. The target has been well straddled.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

action. With the British Expeditionary Force there was the Air Component, which is best regarded as a small air force on its own, with fighters, bombers and Army Cooperation machines. Also in France there was an Advanced Air Striking Force. This latter group was intended for developing to the full the offensive powers of our bombing aeroplanes in the operations on the French front.

The method worked well, and it was possible for the Air Ministry to state on May 24 that at least 500 aircraft had been lost by the enemy in France and Belgium in one week. Since the invasion of the Low Countries it was estimated that the enemy's losses had been 1,500 aircraft.

Air Situation Summed Up

If it is possible to sum up in a few words the air situation at this critical period, it may perhaps be said that the Royal Air Force was proving superior to the Luftwaffe whenever it met it, but that it was hampered by lack of numbers. It was its weight of numbers, together with the usual German disregard for losses, that enabled the German air support for the armoured divisions to be continued on a sufficiently big scale to maintain the advance towards the coast.

With this advance the Royal Air Force operational difficulties inevitably increased. Squadrons were forced to move from their aerodromes, and this brought with it the associated problems of supply and maintenance. The Royal Air Force ground staffs proved their worth at this period, and no praise can be too high for the way in which our

forward to seize the positions. If the tanks were held up, they took cover and signalled for air aid. It was this collaboration between the dive-bombers and the ground forces that enabled the Germans to advance with spectacular rapidity.

It was on May 17 that General Gamelin issued his famous "conquer or die" order to the French troops. It provoked miracles of heroism, but heroism could not hold the combination of air and land machinery that the Germans were using. The line began to bend. At this stage everybody on the Allied side realized that the position was desperate. Mr. Churchill proclaimed the policy of unrelenting assault, and Paris announced that General Weygand had taken General Gamelin's place as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies.

The Royal Air Force alone seemed capable of dealing with the German forces. Wherever it met the enemy it proved successful. At the Landrecies bulge Blenheims bombed incessantly. They used shallow dives and launched their bombs at about 1,500 feet. But air defensive action could not hold the German advance, and on May 21 the Germans claimed to have occupied Amiens, Arras, and Abbeville.

At this time the Royal Air Force was disposed in a manner which had been designed to enable it to give the utmost support to the Allied armies without weakening it for the defence of Great Britain and without taking away its capacity for independent bombing



HEINKEL'S FIERY END

This amazing photograph of a Heinkel 111 in flames was taken from the British aircraft which had engaged it in combat. The Nazi 'plane is well ablaze and, as can be seen, is disintegrating in mid-air.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright





THE R.A.F. WERE ACTIVE IN BELGIUM

At the top of the page can be seen a formation of Bristol Blenheim Mark IV fighter-bombers, and immediately beneath is a photograph of a low-level attack made by Fairey Battles on enemy transport columns. Below, another Nazi transport column in Belgium, after the R.A.F. bombers had smashed it.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Keystone



aircraft were maintained and fed with all necessary supplies under conditions of mounting difficulty and danger.

The Fairey Battles, which had gone out to France on the night before the declaration of war and which had been held in readiness during the whole of the long period of suspended activity that followed the declaration of war, were now working continuously. They were used for dive-bombing German troop concentrations and armoured columns. Meanwhile, the Fleet Air Arm, which had been chiefly engaged on the Norwegian coast, came into the picture in the battle of France. It launched a series of strong attacks on enemy positions along the French and Belgian coasts, deserted by the King of the Belgians. General Georges, Chief of Staff to the Allied Generalissimo Weygand, issued special congratulations to the R.A.F. on the way it was fighting.

His reference was directed chiefly at a heroic action when an essential bridge, heavily defended, had been blown up by R.A.F. bombers. The crews had been volunteers and out of four crews only one man returned. But the bridge was successfully destroyed. This action led to the granting of the first Victoria Crosses gained in the war during 1939 by the Royal Air Force. (*See* illus. p. 806.)

On May 30 a new type of British fighting aeroplane came into large-scale action as a complete squadron for the first time, though it had previously worked in collaboration with other aircraft. It was the Boulton Paul Defiant turret fighter, and the squadron of twelve machines shot down 37 enemy aircraft without loss to itself. (*See* illus. *p.* 804.)



AMERICAN BOMBER IN BATTLE OF FRANCE

During the battles on the Western Front in May and June, 1940, a certain number of American bombers were delivered to and went into action with the French Armée de l'Air. Above, one of the American aircraft being loaded up by French mechanics.

Photo, Wide World

British fighters were reaffirming their technical superiority over the enemy, and on May 28 the Spitfires and Hurricanes had their best day since the invasion of the Low Countries, when they shot down or damaged 79 German aeroplanes for a loss of fourteen. The first German machine, a Messerschmitt 109, was brought down at six in the morning, and the last on this day, a Dornier 215, at nine in the evening.

It was on this day, however, that the Allied cause received its severest shock when it was announced that King Leopold of the Belgians had ordered the Belgian army to capitulate. The R.A.F. was thereupon called on to intensify still further its efforts to save the British and French forces now

This action, as the others then developing, must be looked on as part of the air campaign associated with the evacuation from Dunkirk. The Allied forces had been beleaguered as a result of the swift advance of the German mechanized columns. The bulge in the Allied line had been extended until it reached the sea, so that a loop was formed in which the Allied troops were caught.

The Germans announced their intention of "destroying" the British Expeditionary Force, most of which had been caught in this loop. And it seemed to many military observers at the time that nothing could save the force. The onrush of the German troops was so swift, and the air support which they received so effective, that there appeared to be little chance of taking off the troops by sea.

Nevertheless, the attempt was made by means of a brilliant improvisation. A fleet of small vessels of all kinds was got together by the Royal Navy with the intention of embarking the troops from the beaches as well as from the harbour (*see* full account in Chapter 90). The task placed upon the Royal Air Force was the most difficult it had yet been asked to undertake: no less than the protection of these embarking and virtually defenceless troops and of the ships, large and small, used to get them away.

Evacuation Perils

Since the German dive-bombers had been the spearhead of all the movements across France and Flanders, and had inflicted great damage even on troops armed with full anti-aircraft equipment and having trench or other protection, the prospect of "roofing in" the embarkation points with British fighters so that the destruction of the men might be prevented, seemed remote.

But the Royal Air Force responded to the call with a courage and efficiency which made the world marvel. Fighter patrols were maintained continuously over the retreating Allied troops, and when the German bombers endeavoured to get through they were met so vehemently that their losses mounted to such figures that they were forced to give ground. Nothing like this had ever before been seen in air war.

On May 31 official announcements were made that a large number of troops had been successfully withdrawn. On this day 56 enemy aircraft were destroyed for the loss of sixteen British fighters. The German bombers were given huge fighter escorts, but they were still prevented from doing their task. British soldiers who had been evacuated spoke of the lack of British aeroplanes, but in fact those aeroplanes were working incessantly to intercept and destroy enemy aircraft before they reached the troops.

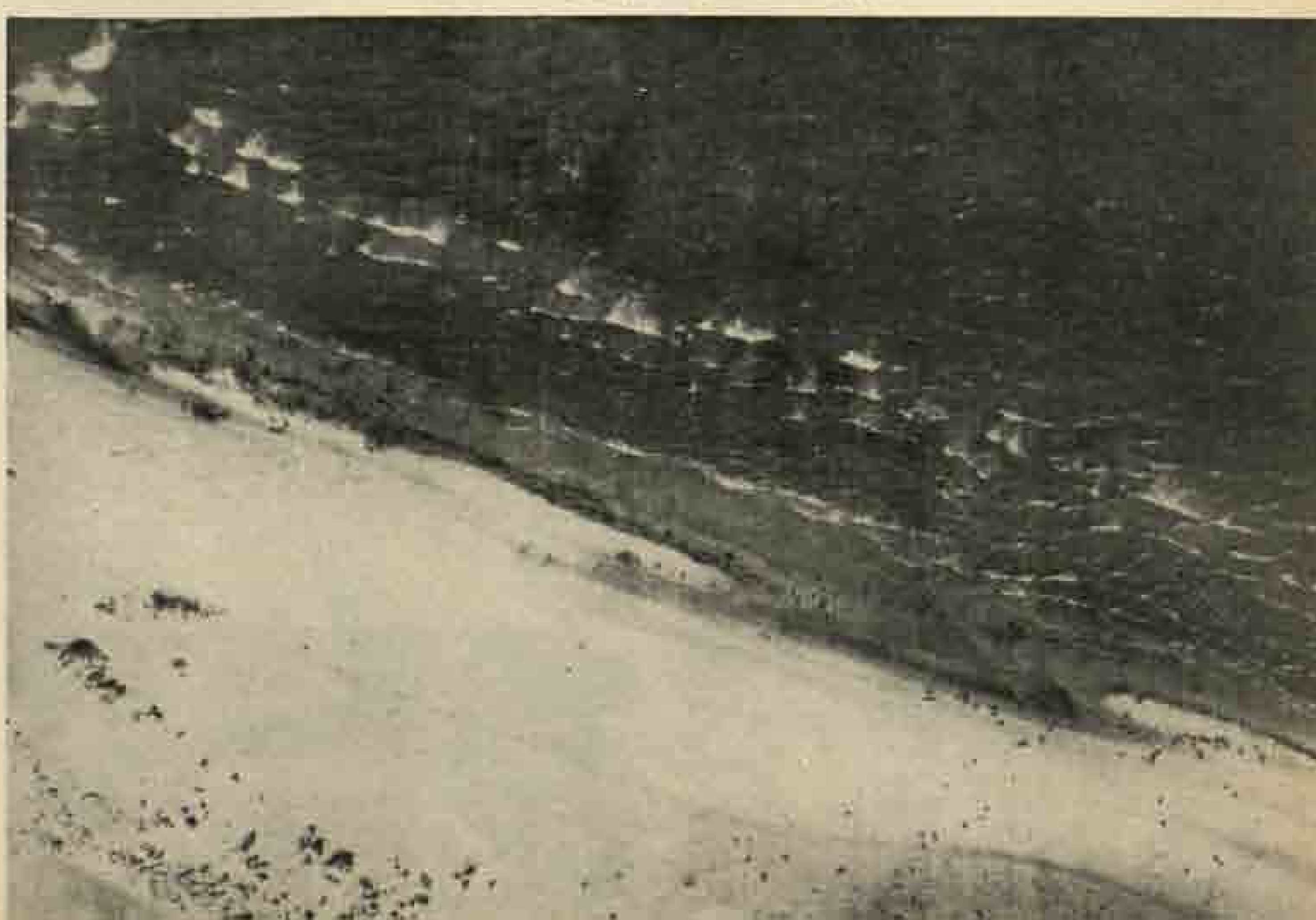
On June 1, 78 German machines were brought down, and at the same time British heavy bombers attacked military objectives in Western Germany. Medium bombers attacked enemy communications and hampered by all means the constricting movement round the beleaguered Allied troops.



DUNKIRK : THE MIRACULOUS EVACUATION

Here are two remarkable photographs taken from the air during the evacuation of the B.E.F from Dunkirk. The upper one shows oil tanks near the shore blazing furiously, while a Lockheed Hudson of the Coastal Command flies past on patrol. Below, part of the beach about four miles east of Dunkirk, with hundreds of soldiers waiting to be taken off.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright





1



2



3

PRIDE OF THE LUFTWAFFE

Here are some of the main types of aircraft used by the Germans during the Battle of France 1, Junkers Ju 87 dive-bomber, two-seater monoplane. 2, Junkers Ju 88 twin-engined bomber 3, Heinkel 111 twin-engined fighter and reconnaissance 'plane. 4, Messerschmitt Me 110 twin-engined fighter. 5, Dornier Do 17 twin-engined bomber. 6, Dornier Do 215 twin-engined bombing and reconnaissance 'plane.

Photos, Keystone; Associated Press; "The Aeroplane"



4



5



6

The Germans, robbed of their prey at Dunkirk by the splendid cooperation of the three arms, Navy, Army, and Air Force, did not pause, but turned at once to the advance through France. This was heralded by the first large-scale air raid on Paris. This occurred on June 3, when enemy aeroplanes, estimated at seventeen, dropped bombs and, according to the statement issued by the French, killed 254 people and wounded 652.

The Royal Air Force, having achieved its remarkable success at Dunkirk, now turned again to its attempt to hold up the German advance into France. Armoured vehicles and supply columns were attacked at every possible opportunity. But the Allied armies were in retreat, so that the Royal Air Force aerodromes in France were never secure and the squadrons were forced to make frequent moves.

It was on June 10 that Italy's declaration of war on Great Britain and France accentuated still further the troubles under which the Allied forces in France were labouring. On this day, too, the Admiralty announced the loss of the aircraft carrier "Glorious" off the coast of Norway. The R.A.F. exerted all its strength in hampering the enemy and damaging his sources of supply. But the German technique of advance still worked: the preparation by bombing aeroplanes, the follow-up by armoured divisions, and the consolidation with infantry.

Italy in the War

Paris was declared an open town and the retreat from the capital began. The Germans entered through the Aubervilliers Gate. Operations in other theatres of war continued, and the battleship "Scharnhorst" was bombed by the Fleet Air Arm near Trondheim Fjord. Malta was bombed by the Italians; Assab was bombed by the British. The South African Air Force raided Kismayu, an Italian aerodrome on the southern tip of Italian Somaliland. Russia moved in the east and occupied five principal towns in Lithuania, but in these parts there was no air action.

On June 16 the resignation of the Reynaud government was announced, and the formation of a new government with Marshal Pétain as Prime Minister and M. Pugeot as Air Minister. The French air force continued up to this time to fight with determination, but in the evening Marshal Pétain announced that the French Army had been ordered to stop fighting.

In these closing stages of the battle of France the Royal Air Force had to concern itself with returning to Britain with as much of its equipment as possible, in readiness for the attack on England loudly proclaimed by the German propaganda service as the next move.

Actually the Royal Air Force managed to get away with most of its equipment and to leave nothing behind of value to the enemy. But these withdrawal operations inevitably restricted its offensive action for a few days. It was fully ready, however, to tackle any attempts to raid Great Britain.

Such attempts in somewhat larger force than before were made on June 19 and June 20. On June 19 in particular a notable achievement was the shooting down by British fighters of seven night raiders. The night was bright and moonlit, and this helped the fighters in their task. But it was the most successful night interception that had occurred up to that time.



NEW ZEALAND 'ACE'
Flying Officer Edgar Kain, a New Zealander, familiarly known as 'Cobber' Kain (above, right), was one of the first air 'aces' of the Second Great War. After winning the D.F.C., he was unfortunately killed in an accident.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

At this period another feat of the Royal Air Force deserves special note—the raiding of objectives in Italy. While there were French bases available for these operations they did not differ from other night bombing work; but when the collapse of France took away these bases, the raiding of objectives in Italy entailed very long flights. On June 22 France signed the armistice with Germany. On this day Britain signified her intention of prosecuting the war alone with as great vigour as before by another attack by the Fleet Air Arm on the "Scharnhorst" and by the sinking of a 6,000-ton German supply ship in the North Sea by the Coastal Command. German aircraft factories at many places were also bombed.

During the period from the invasion of the Low Countries to the collapse of France further evidence was given of the value of air preparation in all troop movements. This had been shown by the Norwegian campaign, but it was further emphasized by the German advance through France.

So fierce was the air assault that the defending troops could not stand up to the subsequent advance of the armoured divisions. It was only when the air defence showed an equal vigour and when the air counter-attack was maintained on the largest scale, as at Dunkirk, that the enemy's activities could in any way be checked.

It is also to be noted that the technical quality of the aircraft did not seem, during the advance into France, to be of such importance as before. The German dive-bombers of the Junkers 87 type were not of advanced design, but they served their purpose in the air preparation. Other of the German aircraft were of much higher technical quality, and the Junkers 88 bomber showed that it had a good turn of speed. It could be used for dive-bombing, though it was not a specialized machine for this purpose.

The Heinkel 111 was also used extensively and was the machine chosen for most of the raids on Britain and on France. Dornier 17 aeroplanes and Dornier 215s were used a great deal for reconnaissance work. They also had a fairly good performance for the load carried. But during this time no German bombers put in an appearance which were armed so heavily as the British bombers or had any form of equipment which could be compared with the hydraulically operated turrets.

German Aircraft Types

Probably the most successful of the German aeroplanes was the relatively new Messerschmitt 110, a twin-engined fighter carrying cannon and machine-guns and having a high top speed and good climb. It was subsequently used also as a high-performance bomber, being modified to carry a small load of bombs without any appreciable reduction in performance. (Six types of German aircraft are illustrated in page 942.)



PARIS THE VICTIM OF NAZI RAIDERS

A mass German air raid was made upon Paris on June 3, 1940. Over a thousand bombs were dropped and considerable damage was caused. This photograph shows a block of flats in a residential quarter of the city after a bomb had struck the side of it.

Photo, Associated Press

The British aeroplanes during this period reaffirmed their technical superiority in performance and in fire power. The eight-gun Spitfire and Hurricane fighters proved their worth especially at Dunkirk. Here also the behaviour of the Boulton Paul Defiant supported the theory of the turret fighter. Instead of attacking when the aircraft is pointed at the enemy, in the manner of the ordinary multi-gun single-seat fighter, the turret fighter attacks by gaining a position from which the gunner in the four-gun turret immediately behind the pilot's cockpit can bring effective fire to bear.

Minor changes in the military equipment of the enemy during this period included the more extensive use of fire-resisting fuel tanks. These tanks were composed of successive layers of different materials and they greatly reduced the risks of fire when struck by machine-gun bullets.

Armour also came into use to an increasing extent. Some of the German bombers shot down were found to be fairly heavily armoured. There was a gradual adjustment of the aircraft of both sides to meet the conditions of the war as they were seen to develop. But as a whole the British technical lead was affirmed.

Two sharply divided methods may be distinguished in the tactics employed: the first during the attack on the Low Countries, the second during the advance across France. The sandwich method, already described, was used for the attack on the Low Countries and represented a novel application of air power. In the advance across France perfectly orthodox methods were used throughout, although perhaps an unexpectedly strong emphasis was placed on dive-bombing as air preparation for the advance of ground troops.

Aerial fighting went on where it left off in the war of 1914–18; that is to say, there were dog-fights, and when large formations clashed the aircraft usually split up so that eventually a series of individual combats occurred. This was in contradiction to the predictions of many experts, who had said that, owing to the high speeds of modern aircraft, dog-fighting would no longer be possible.

Douhet's Theory of Attack

The theory of General Douhet was not seen in practice to any great extent. This theory postulates the use of aircraft in mass to attack large centres of population with the object of breaking down at the source the will to war. The German attack on Rotterdam may be said to have been derived from the Douhet theory, but it was only part of a much bigger operation. It did show, however, what extensive areas can be devastated in a city when they are attacked by modern bombers working in large formations and when there is no strong defence.

There is one other point to be noted about the German air operations up to the fall of France; it is the ineffectiveness of their night work. A great many night raids were made on Britain, apparently with the object of attacking military targets; but in the vast majority of cases the airmen seemed to be unable to find their objectives. It was suggested that this was the result of inadequate training in night flying, but, in fact, German commercial pilots of the pre-war period were known to be as good at night flying as the pilots of other countries.

More probable was the view that the targets were not discovered by night because they were well camouflaged, and because Britain is an extremely difficult country for the airman to find his way about. Its narrow, twisting roads, hedges and lanes, and its irregular fields make it a puzzle country for the airman. The consequence was that targets which were well camouflaged were probably not found. It was clear that if larger and more readily distinguished targets were selected the Germans would easily be able to find them by night.

British night flying Service pilots, however, were probably rather better trained, and there was certainly a greater number of trained and experienced night flying pilots in the R.A.F.

Chapter 93

THE BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE IN THE BATTLE OF THE RIVERS

The Highland Division Sent to the Left Flank—Story of Newcomb's Rifles—Withdrawal Across the Seine—On the Bresle Line—Heroic Rearguard Action of the 'Amps'—Tank Onslaughts—Retreat of the 51st Division: Enemy Blocks the Way to the Port—At Veules-les-Roses and St. Valery

(A fuller account of the 51st (Highland) Division is given in Chapter 149)

When the great offensive opened on May 10 the bulk of the British Expeditionary Force was rushed to Belgium in response to King Leopold's urgent appeal for aid. Within a few days, however, the position it had taken up in front of Louvain was made untenable by reason of the French collapse on the Meuse, and the British divisions, heavily engaged with the enemy, began that retreat which ended on the beaches of Dunkirk. There was, however, a considerable number of British troops who were not entrapped in the gradually closing pocket about Ypres and Lille. In particular there was the 51st (Highland) Division, which, when the battle began, was holding a portion of the French line in front of the Maginot forts in the Metz region, and scattered here and there in what had been the zone of British command during the months of inaction, i.e. from September to May, a number of units of very varied description and size.

As the position deteriorated the French High Command withdrew the Highland Division from the line at Metz and sent it to reinforce the Allies' left flank, and at the same time the scattered battalions—very "scratch" some of them—were hastily formed into brigades or even divisions. To one of these—it became known as Vickforce—was given the task of holding up the enemy advance in a sector between the Somme and the Seine.

Highlanders on the Left Flank

It was May 19, the day on which General Weygand took over from Gamelin, and the position chosen was along the Béthune, a little river which enters the Channel at Dieppe, and a wooded ridge on its south-western bank; on this line Vickforce dug itself in.

For ten days the men mined bridges, erected wire obstacles, built road blocks, concealed anti-tank rifles and Bren guns in strong emplacements; and in a brave attempt to bluff the enemy into the belief that they were stronger far than they were, set up in dummy emplacements spoof soldiers made of sandbags, wearing steel helmets and armed with tent poles. So day and night they laboured; and as they laboured there poured over and through them without intermission columns of refugees and troops and military transport escaping from the Germans who had smashed the French line at Abbeville and Amiens. After ten days the little force was re-organized as the Beauman Division, under Major-General A. B. Beauman, and it then had three battalions of about 700 men each. One of the three was known as "Newcomb's Rifles" and commanded by Lieut.-Col. L. E. C. Perowne, of the Royal Engineers.

From May 19 until June 8 this gallant collection of British oddments stood somewhat aloof from the confused battle on the Somme, although they were subjected to air bombing every day. Time and again German armoured vehicles and motorized infantry approached, but always they withdrew without an attack. At length, however, the battle drew very near, and it became apparent that the Béthune line, in one section of which 300 rifles were now strung out along 12 miles of front—about one man to 70 yards—could not be held much longer unless it were strongly reinforced.

By June 7 the situation could hardly be graver, and a scheme of withdrawal in small parties moving independently through the broken wooded country to the ferries over the Seine west of Rouen was worked out in careful detail. The scheme was given the code name "Robin Hood," and late in the afternoon of the next day the order went out to the



Photo, P.N.A.

THE CANADIANS WERE DISAPPOINTED

When the situation in France grew desperate a large force of Canadians was sent there in the early days of June, 1940. They arrived within 30 miles of Paris when they were ordered to retire, and returned to England disgusted at not having encountered the enemy. Above, Canadians at a West Coast port on their way to France.



BRITISH HIDE-OUT IN NORMAN FIELDS

Many British troops were placed in jeopardy in Normandy when their communications were cut during the German thrust in June, 1940. Owing to fog off the coast evacuation was only partially successful and numbers were captured. Above, British soldiers hiding in a roadside ditch in Normandy to escape observation by Nazi aircraft.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

companies: "Robin Hood; blow all bridges and craters before leaving. Take particular care against air observation. No especial hurry." So the 2,000-odd British soldiers began to thread their disciplined way through forest paths and a countryside cluttered with the debris of armies in retreat and a populace in flight.

In what follows we tell only of Newcomb's Rifles, but the other two battalions had the same task and performed it not less competently. Towards the evening of June 9 detachments of the Newcomb's were nearing the Seine. The Germans were in Rouen and were sending out to the north mobile columns of tanks and truck-borne infantry to cut off the retreat; the small river towns of Caudebec and Duclair were choked with wreckage, human and material; Duclair, moreover, had been bombed and was in flames, and dense smoke from burning oil tanks drifted low across the woods. In the dusk the battalion's commander set out in his car to "C" Company, who were nearest Rouen, and carried their headquarters staff in several journeys to Fontaine. On his last journey he ran into a concertina wire in the dark—wire put up around a number of German tanks parked for the night! At once he drew heavy fire and the car was wrecked, though fortunately there were no casualties. Colonel Perowne and his Intelligence Officer, covering the escape of their party, were pursued with bursts of rifle fire, but managed to slip away through the trees. At Fontaine they found the French ferry boats tied up on the south bank, and as their crews remained deaf to every call the headquarters staff spent the night in a lair amongst the rocks.

Meanwhile, battalion rear headquarters, who had taken refuge for the night in a barn, were surprised by four enemy tanks which drove along the road from Rouen at dawn, spraying woods and hedges at random with machine-gun fire. Watching through cracks in the barn door, the little party of British soldiers saw the first tank turn in at the farm gate. Without losing a moment one man crawled out of the barn unnoticed and opened a second gate. Then at his signal the rest flung open the barn door and dashed out in their small car and on two motor-cycles. Picking up their comrade, they got clear away, despite the wild volleys of the enemy.

Adventures of 'Newcomb's Rifles'

At the same time the headquarters company was threading its way by compass through the forest of Trait, avoiding all the roads and paths which by this time were held by the enemy. For more than six hours the company commander followed an accurate course in the thick of the smoke-filled forest, and emerged through the trees within a few hundred yards of the ferry which was his objective.

Early on June 10 the ferries resumed operation, although the approaches to them were jammed with refugees and military transport. At 6 o'clock Caudebec was bombed and fires were started, and air attacks were continuous all day. In the midst of the work of crossing the ferry captain refused to return from the far bank, and as he ignored the furious ringing of the bell, volunteers swam the river and placed him under armed guard. At long last the crossing was completed, the refugees and French troops being sent across first, and then, when the



BRITISH BOMBER FINDS THE TARGET

The R.A.F. played an all-important part in enabling the withdrawal of the B.E.F. from Dunkirk to be carried out successfully. In addition to engaging in combat the hordes of enemy aircraft which sought to sink our ships they destroyed everything in the vicinity which might help the German war machine. Here a cloud of dense smoke is rising from a burning oil tank destroyed by the R.A.F. at Dunkirk.

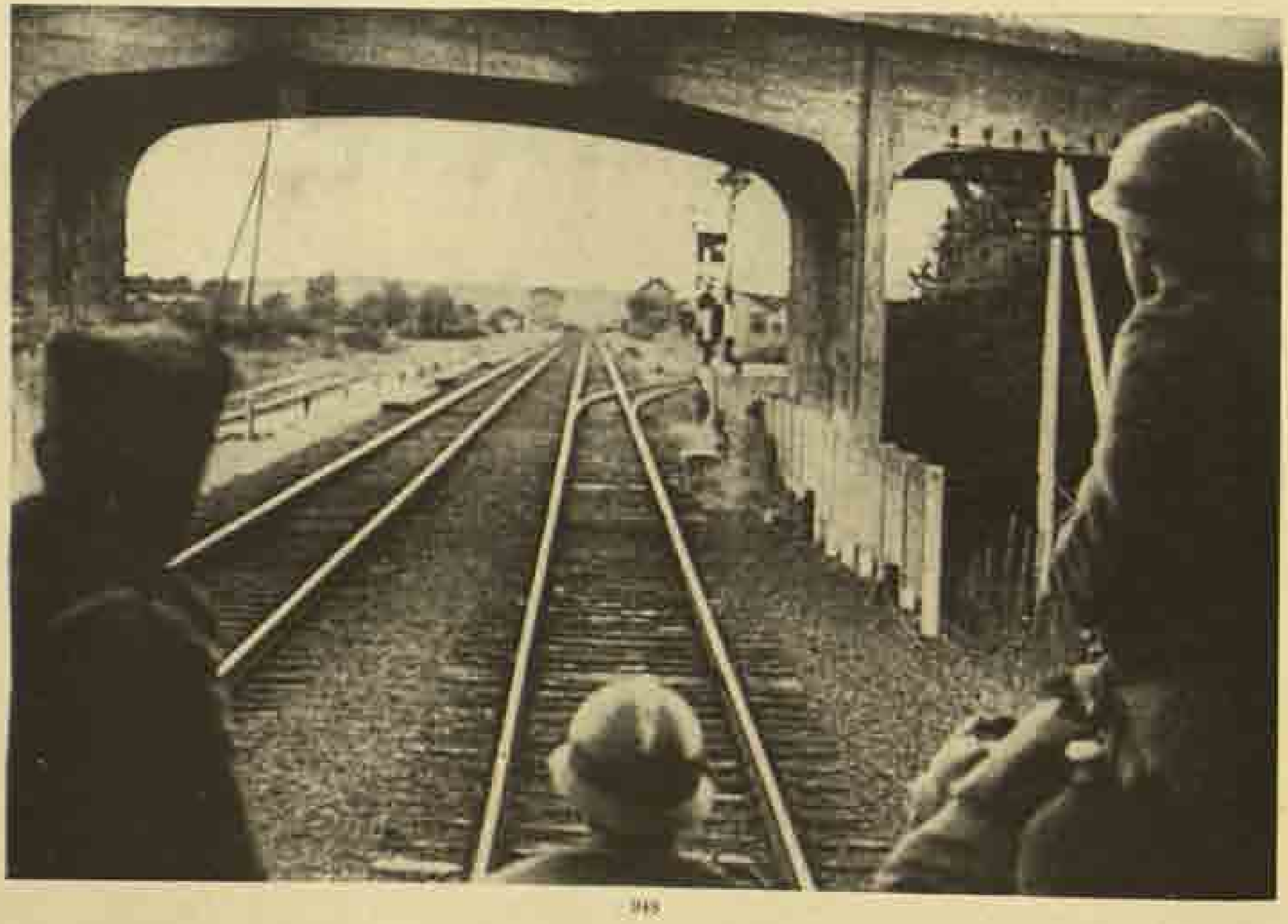
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



FRENCH ON THE WEYGAND LINE

After the Germans swept through the Low Countries the French established a line on the Somme-Aisne front. Above, a French machine-gun emplacement on the Weygand Defence Line. Below, French infantrymen guarding a strategic point on a railway line in this sector.

Photos, Associated Press



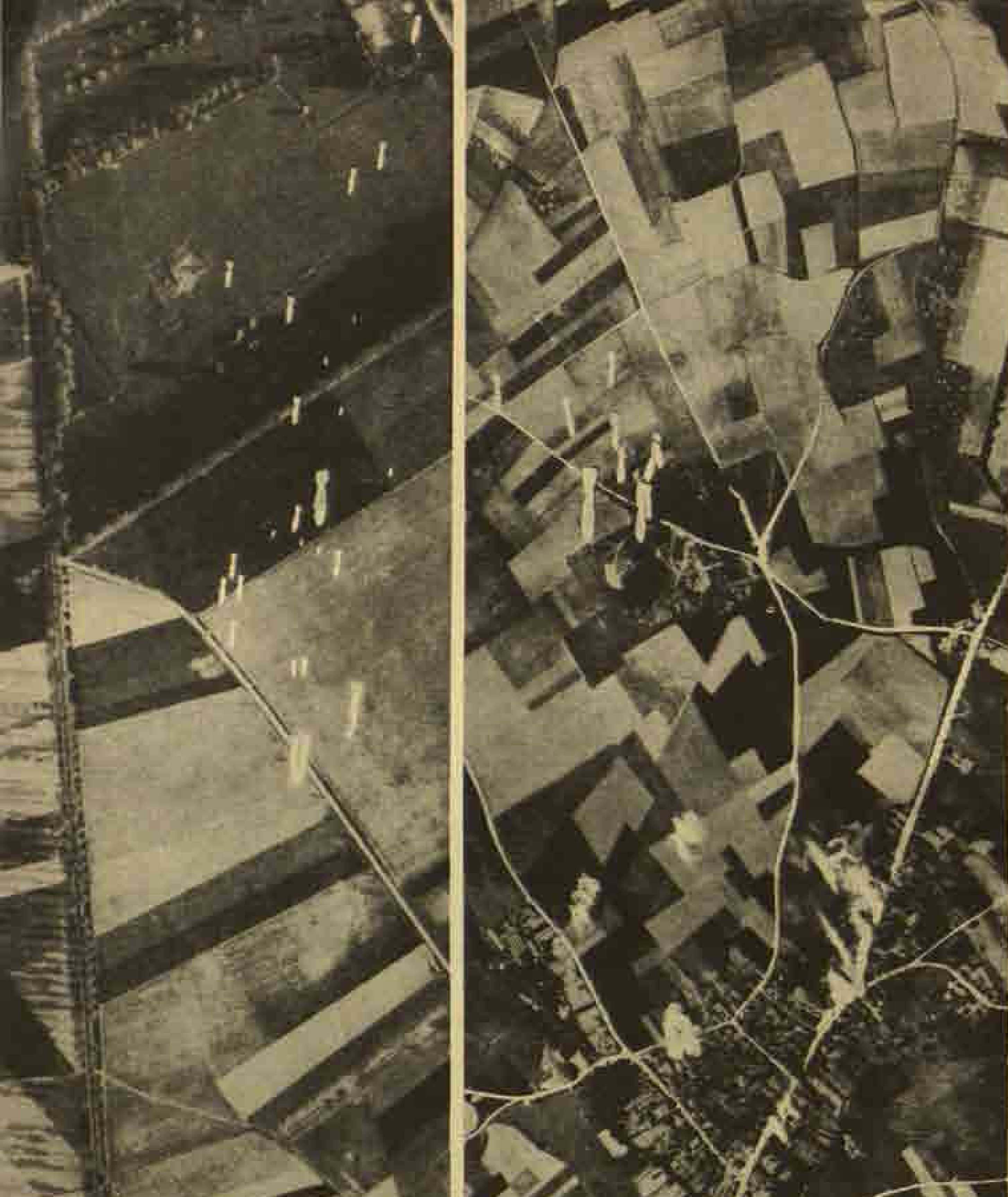


TANKS IN AND OUT OF ACTION

In the photograph above a British cruiser tank is advancing up a country lane in France in the vicinity of the battle front. Below, the crew of a British tank which broke down near the level-crossing of a small French town are busily engaged in essential repairs. As indicated by the direction plate, this town is about 46 miles (74 km.) from Rouen.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright





BRITISH BOMBERS STRADDLE GERMAN COLUMNS IN FRANCE

Here is photographic evidence of the work carried out by the R.A.F. in harassing the enemy during the Battle of France. Left, a salvo of twenty-five bombs is seen falling upon an enemy transport column going northwards along the straight road from Ruisseauville. Right, bombs bursting amid an enemy transport column moving through a French town, while other bombs are still falling.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright



O.C. 'BEAUMAN'S DIVISION'

Above is Maj.-Gen. A. B. Beauman, who led the composite British force on the Somme which became known as the Beauman Division. Its deeds are related in this chapter.

Photo, Bassano

approaches to the ferry had been cleared, the British troops and their transport brought up the rear. In this way four-fifths of Newcomb's Rifles crossed the Seine with all their arms and baggage, and nine days later, after further fighting and many an adventure, they succeeded in getting safely away from Cherbourg to England.

While Vickforce was engaged in this little war of its own, cut off from its comrades and removed from the main battle, the 51st Division and the other troops that went to make up the "little B.E.F." were engaged in heavy fighting not far away.

On the Bresle Line

On May 27 the Highlanders were holding the line of the little river Bresle, from which they were sent forward to the Abbeville area to defend the Somme bridgeheads in conjunction with units of the French Ninth Corps. Very heavy fighting developed from June 1 onwards, and combined attacks by the French, assisted by the 152nd and 153rd Brigades, at dawn on June 4 failed to secure the bridgehead. The division suffered heavy casualties, especially the 152nd Brigade (Seaforths and Camerons).

A particularly brilliant incident of this day's fighting was the highly successful attack by the Gordons against enemy forces strongly entrenched in the Grand Bois: the position was carried after the most gallant fighting, and the whole wood was cleared of the enemy.

Heavy enemy pressure, however, finally made a withdrawal inevitable, and the division fell back again to the line of the Bresle, where at one time it occupied a front more than 18 miles long. These positions were held for only three days; then on the night of June 8 a further withdrawal was carried out to the line of the Béthune. Next morning (June 9) the 154th Brigade was detached and ordered to defend the Havre area, to take up a line running due south from Fécamp, in the hope that it could hold it until the other two brigades could join it.

Before we trace the final fortunes of the 51st Division, however, we may recall one or two of the innumerable and, for the most part, unrecorded acts of heroism and endurance performed by British detachments, involved in the confusion of a battle which was also an almost continuous retreat. There was, for instance, the rearguard action of a small company of the "Amps"—battalions of middle-aged pioneers.

"These men," wrote "Eye-Witness," "were old soldiers specially picked to drop their spade and shovel and take up a rifle to delay the German advance towards a bridge. They were rushed up to the top of a wooded hill where German tanks, followed by infantry, were advancing. Tanks suddenly appeared, and heavy fire was opened on them by the 'Amps.' One after another three tanks were hit and put out of action. After holding back the German advance the 'Amps' withdrew towards the river. When they reached it they found that the bridge which they had been protecting had been blown up. Their retreat was cut off. The middle-aged officer in charge of the party at once decided to swim across the wide, swiftly flowing river to obtain a boat from the other side. He would not allow any of his men to take the risk. 'It was a fine action for a man by no means young,' a fellow-officer told me. 'He stripped off his uniform and plunged into the river. His men, hiding from German tanks in bushes by the bank, watched him grow smaller and smaller as he slowly crossed the river. At last they saw a tiny figure clamber up the other bank. Shortly afterwards the officer came back rowing a large boat, and all the men were then taken safely across.'"

The evacuation of the military hospitals from the area threatened by the German advance also called not only for first-class organization, but for courage of a high order. The evacuation of one British military hospital was described as a miracle of calmness and efficiency. As the danger drew near all the wounded were carefully driven away in ambulances to a hospital train, which soon took them far from the danger zone. Then all the equipment was carefully packed and stowed in lorries and ambulances. Just before the little party drove off, men were treated who had been wounded by shells falling less than a mile away. When the retreating detachments reached the Seine, officers and men loaded a number of boats down to the water's edge with wounded and paddled them across the river from the north to the south bank under heavy fire with nothing but a piece of wood to use as a paddle. Then the wounded were carried ashore while shells shrieked overhead from the German batteries, which had taken up their positions on the north bank.

A Tank Onslaught

Throughout, the retreat from the Somme to the Seine was conducted in circumstances of extraordinary difficulty. There was no front worthy of the name; no one knew where the Germans were massing, when or where the next attack would come; danger lurked on every hand, and in particular the roaring, rumbling tanks seemed to be everywhere. Here is the story of



O.C. 'NEWCOMB'S RIFLES'

Lt.-Col. Perowne commanded one of the three battalions of the Beauman Division known as 'Newcomb's Rifles.' The battalion did magnificent work during the withdrawal through Normandy.

Photo, Lafayette



NAZI VANGUARD IN ROUEN

By June 9, 1940, the enemy, advancing from Forges-les-Eaux, had reached the Seine, and detachments of German troops were already in Rouen. Nazi soldiers are here seen in conversation with French civilians among the ruins of the famous city.

Photo, E.N.A.

one of the many tank onslaughts. It was told to "Eye-Witness" by a young second lieutenant.

"My platoon," he said, "with several others, was ordered to hold up the German advance towards an important bridge. During the night we dug ourselves in near a road leading down a hillside to the bridge. With us were three French anti-tank guns, carefully concealed, in charge of a French lieutenant. About 3 a.m., when there was just the faintest grey in the sky, a light German tank came down the road. An anti-tank gun opened fire and it swerved round and rushed up the hill. Not long after we heard the dull rumble of a column of traffic coming down the hill on a small by-road partly hidden by trees. Suddenly three tanks rolled into view out of the trees, followed by a stream of vehicles. We could not tell in the dim light whether they were French or German. We held our fire. Then the three leading tanks, a light reconnaissance tank and two medium tanks, about 35 tons, came well into view broadside on from our positions only a short distance away. The turrets of the tanks were open, and standing in them were men with German steel helmets. Unfortunately, only one of the anti-tank guns was mounted in a position to cover this by-road. The French lieutenant opened fire and knocked out two medium tanks. These blocked the road for the long column of vehicles, at least 50 in number, coming down the road closely packed. Every single man in the column jumped out of his vehicle and dashed up the hill. One of the Germans who jumped out of the leading medium tank was shot dead by one of our men before he got to the ground. We opened fire on the crowd of men running up the hill and caused many casualties.

"The men seemed rather demoralized by the unexpected attack from our hidden positions. They apparently took with them all the weapons they could. As soon as they got on top of the hill they began to open fire, at first with rifles and machine-guns firing tracer bullets, then with anti-tank guns, and later with what seemed to be a light field gun. We replied with rifle fire. Though the Germans' fire was heavy, it was very inaccurate. They seemed to be a little too far back over the crest of the hill, and their fire mostly came above us. After about half an hour it was so intense that we sent back for reinforcements, as there were only about 15 to 20 men in our position all told. Our messenger could not get through

Tank Crews at Bay



WHERE ALLIES CROSSED THE SEINE

This panoramic view of Caudebec-en-Caux (on the Seine, 27 miles N.W. of Rouen) is taken from the left bank of the river. On ferries similar to that in the photograph many British and French troops crossed the river before the Germans could cut them off. In some cases individual officers and men swam across the wide and swiftly flowing river under fire to fetch a boat.

Photo, E.N.A.

because the fire was so heavy, so we had to carry on. After about 2½ hours the fire from the Germans was so concentrated that it was decided to withdraw. We went down the hill to a group of houses, where we found a motor-car. With a number of men I started off in this towards the river. We came under heavy fire. One tire was hit, and then the firing became so hot that we jumped out and crept along in a ditch which gave us a little cover. We had several casualties, and I fear one man who is missing may have been killed. Our cover was so slight that bullets went only about eight inches above our heads, and it took us three-quarters of an hour to cover a hundred yards."

Afterwards a colonel of the unit told "Eye-Witness" this same young officer decided to swim across the river and fetch a boat, in spite of the fact that the river had been under heavy fire.



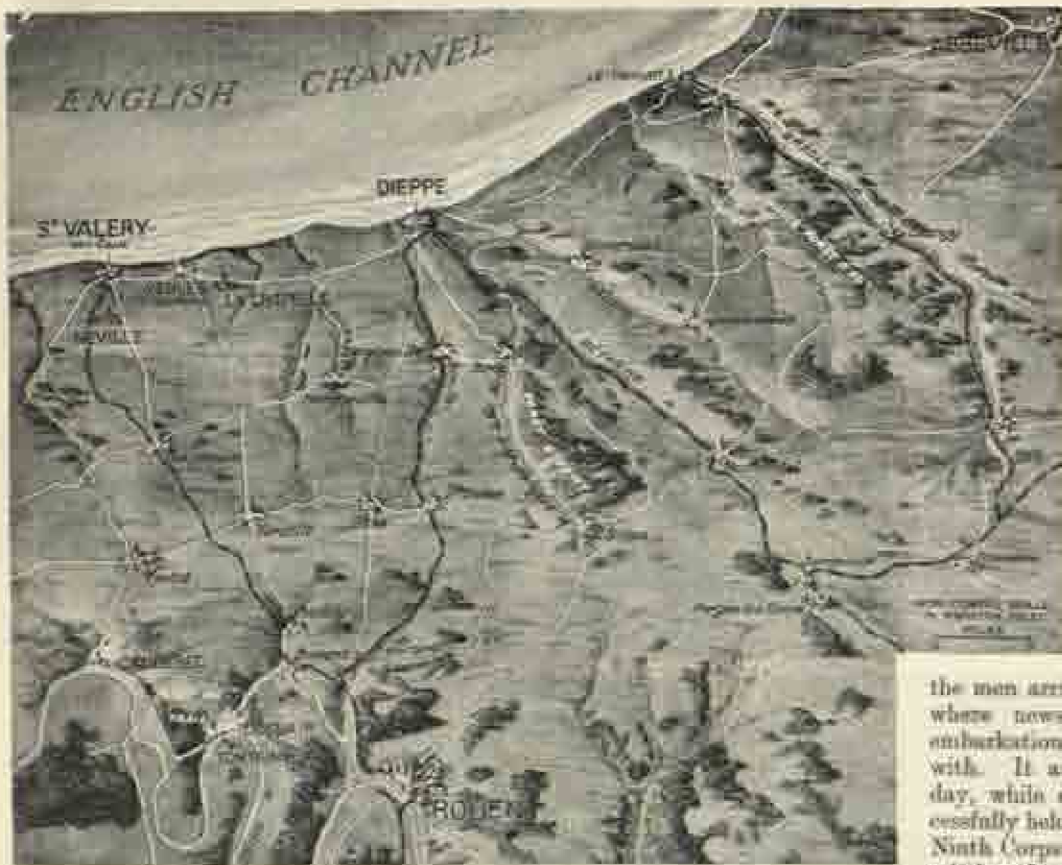


SOME OF THE IMMORTAL FIFTY-FIRST

The Highlanders of the 51st Division gave an excellent account of themselves when they defended the Somme bridgeheads during the Battle of France. Men of this famous division are pictured in this page. Above, Gordon Highlanders cleaning Bren carriers in a French farmyard. Left, mails arriving at a Battalion H.Q. of the Seaforth Highlanders. Below, the C.O. of the Camerons inspects the guard while on his rounds.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright





HERE WAS FOUGHT THE BATTLE OF THE RIVERS

From mid-May to mid-June troops of the 'little B.E.F.' strove valiantly to uphold the left flank of the wavering French line. Overborne by vastly superior numbers, they retreated slowly to the coast, fighting back all the way. Among the men engaged were the famous 51st Highland Division and Beauman's Division, a mixed unit whose exploits rivalled those of Carey's Force in March, 1918. *Drawn for* THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Felix Gordon*

and a fellow officer who had started to swim across with his men had disappeared. The lieutenant found a boat, towed it with one hand across the swiftly flowing river, and took it back packed with wounded.

To return to the 51st Division. On June 9 one of its brigades, the 154th, was detached and ordered to take up a line running due south from Fécamp, with a view to defending the Havre area. Eventually this brigade was evacuated to England. On the evening of the following day, June 10, the remaining two brigades, the 152nd and 153rd, moved back along the coast-line via Dieppe, to take up their final positions round St. Valery-en-Caux. A bridgehead was formed around St. Valery, the southern portion being held by units of the French Ninth Corps, the eastern face by the 153rd Brigade, and the western area by the 152nd Brigade. The following day the enemy appeared in force and launched heavy attacks with large numbers of tanks, assisted by very accurate mortar fire and the cooperation of masses of aircraft, against which, apart from ground fire, we had little protection.

Highlanders Around St. Valery

Heavy casualties were suffered by the 153rd Brigade (Gordon Highlanders and Black Watch). The men, however, held on gallantly throughout the day and the enemy failed to break through at any point on the eastern wing. Increasing fire, however, especially from heavy mortars, guided by accurate direction from the air, made the line ever more difficult to hold. At night the order was received to withdraw to the beaches and for the troops to embark at St. Valery, where vessels were to be sent to receive them. A rendezvous was given at St. Valery railway station, and embarkation was to begin at 2 a.m. on June 12.

Gen. Fortune's final order to his division, dated St. Valery, June 11, was to the effect that the Navy would probably make an effort to take the division off by boat, perhaps that night, or in two nights. All ranks must realize that the operation could be achieved only by the full cooperation of everyone, and that the utmost discipline must prevail. Men would board boats with equipment and arms; vehicles would be rendered useless. Finally, if the enemy should attack before the whole force was evacuated, all ranks must realize that it would be up to them to defeat them. The enemy might attack with tanks, but we had anti-tank guns. If the infantry could stop the enemy's infantry, that was all that was required, while our anti-tank guns and rifles could inflict casualties on the enemy's armoured fighting vehicles.

The withdrawal was successfully made and the men arrived near their rendezvous, where news was received that the embarkation could not be proceeded with. It appeared that the previous day, while our two brigades had successfully held their positions, the French Ninth Corps had been forced back, permitting the enemy to get round behind the British positions and occupy the port. Harbour and beaches were already occupied by the enemy.

At 8 a.m. the French capitulated and handed over the town to the Germans. There was therefore no further hope of escape, and the remnant of the division, totalling about 150 to 200 officers and between 4,000 and 5,000 men, was taken prisoner by the enemy, together with the French Ninth Corps.

One of the unhappiest aspects of this tragic event was the fact that at Veules-les-Roses, a little port a few miles eastward of St. Valery, a large number of other British troops were at that moment being embarked.

Some belonged to an R.A.S.C. Petrol Company, and after days of hard driving under heavy shell-fire had reached La Chapelle, 7-8 miles east of St. Valery, on June 10. Orders were given to destroy all vehicles not needed for transport of their own personnel, and to move on to the village of Neville, ten miles south of St. Valery. As the column drove out at midnight, an enemy barrage was creeping up to within a hundred yards of the parking place.

After three hours of snail-like progress over bad roads in pitch darkness they reached Neville early on June 11 and began to organize the village to resist the enemy. But in the afternoon the car park was located by enemy

aircraft, shelled, and set on fire; eleven vehicles were destroyed. All the men escaped injury, however, and the unit was ordered to make its way to the beach at St. Valery—there to await the C.O., who, on a push-cycle, had gone to report at divisional headquarters. H.Q. had moved, and so the officer returned to Neville, destroyed all petrol supplies there, and made for St. Valery.

At the outskirts of the town he was stopped by heavy shelling, and so turned eastwards in the direction of Veules, hoping that he would come across his men later. On the way he had collected a number of stragglers. At Veules they found themselves on the cliff top, 150 feet or more above the beaches.

An attempt was made to get through a wood that ran down to the beach, but the enemy was there in force, and a dozen of our men were picked off. There was nothing for it but to return to the cliff top, where the party was joined by part of the missing Petrol Company.

It was now well after midnight, and something had to be done quickly if they were not all to be taken like rats in a trap at the coming of daylight. A signaller N.C.O. dashed a message in Morse to ships waiting in the Channel off



THE FIGHTING RETREAT

On the right, men of a Highland regiment are holding a concealed machine-gun post on the edge of a wood. As in the war of 1914-1918, the famous 51st (Highland) Division won further laurels. Below, pioneers of the A.M.P.C., which played a gallant part in delaying the Nazi advance, are seen unloading ammunition at a dump in France.
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright







ALL WERE IN THE THICK OF IT

R.A.M.C., R.A.S.C. and the Royal Corps of Signals all played a notable part in the Battle of France. Above, Signallers working throughout the night to preserve communications; left, R.A.M.C. unloading wounded from an ambulance in France; below, men of the R.A.S.C., with an anti-tank rifle, ward off attacks and keep the supply lines open.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright



St. Valery, warning the boats to stand by, while others of the party sought frantically for ropes or other means of descending the steep cliffs.

Pulling up a wire fence, men unwound it and lowered this makeshift "rope" over the cliff edge. They tried to climb down on it, but it broke and several men fell headlong.

There was a windlass standing on the edge of the cliff, and the men found a wire hawser, which they attached. Some tried to descend this way, but the hawser was greasy and their hands slipped, so that more fell to the bottom. Then someone thought of their rifle slings. These were made of very stout webbing,





WHERE MANY OF THE B.E.F. WERE TRAPPED

When the 51st Division became involved in the Allied retreat in June, 1940, two of its brigades (152nd and 153rd) were compelled to surrender at Saint Valery-en-Caux (above) when the French capitulated on June 12 and handed over the town to the Germans. Left, a short stretch of the Normandy coast showing ports of St. Valery and Veules-les-Roses, linked by a line of caves which provided hiding-places for many men of the B.E.F. pending evacuation by the Navy.

Photo, E.N.A. Map by courtesy of "Daily Telegraph"

and if they could be joined securely might furnish a life-line by which the men could reach the beach below. By reef knots and the use of the stout brass clips at the ends the slings were fashioned into a "rope," and it was tested. It held, and for seven long hours it stood the strain while all the party at the cliff top slid down gingerly.

The day was well advanced before the Commanding Officer—last of them to descend—made his way down to the beach, but mercifully there was a projecting piece of cliff that seems to have hidden the entire scene from the Germans near by. Not a shot was fired during the slow and perilous adventure. Below the men found boats that took them off to the waiting transports.

Last Down the 'Rope'

Meanwhile, at St. Valery itself, stirring events were happening. Up to noon on June 11 things had been pretty quiet. There were many Allied troops there, including cavalry and infantry regiments and numerous smaller parties who had lost touch with their own formations. A few minutes after midday a deafening crash was the prelude to a close and heavy bombardment by the enemy, who had come round the town along the edge of the cliff and were shelling the troops in the valley below.

The account of what followed is from the narrative of a gunner in the B.E.F. There was a scramble for what little cover could be got; from pier and promenade men fled down to the beaches. Some made their way up to the town to fight the incoming enemy; a few found boats and rowed out seawards, while others stripped and tried to swim out. Discarding greatcoats, many men made their way over the shingle to places where the towering cliffs gave some shelter; the tide was coming in, but it turned before reaching the refugees.

In the town there was much shelling and machine-gun fire. The enemy sent out two boats filled with soldiers, who rowed along parallel with the shore and machine-gunned those sheltering there. Until dusk, seven hours later, it would not be safe to stir far away, but on hands and knees they made their way over the shingle towards Veules-les-Roses, a mile and a half away. Here and there the men found caves in the cliffs. Fifty or so—mostly Seaforths—were cooped up in a cave seven feet wide and twenty feet long. They had little food and no water. All the while there was a furious bombardment, bringing down lumps of chalk and rock. At dusk they were joined by French stragglers, and men stood along the foot of the cliffs two and three deep in places.

Tired out with the strain of waiting for ships that did not come, the men dropped off to sleep. There were many false reports, but about 2 a.m. there really were vessels offshore. At 2.30 a.m. a ship's lifeboat came to take off the soldiers to a cargo vessel some 300 yards out. The trip took 25 minutes out and back, and only twenty-five to thirty men could be carried at a time.

A second boat was brought into service, and things went more quickly; later others came to the beach—now running the gauntlet of enemy shell-fire, as the Germans searched for the ships with their artillery. About 5 a.m. aircraft began dive-bombing over the beach, and also machine-gunned the rescuers and waiting troops. But visibility was poor, and the troops fired back with rifles and machine-guns and brought down at least one Nazi.

Dawn disclosed a beach still filled with soldiers waiting for the boats. Many more men had filtered in from Veules during the night. Now the enemy started to shell the beaches. Soon the trees were ablaze, and shells fell around the lifeboats. But under the supervision of the Royal Marines, who laughed and sang and jocularly called out "Cheer up!" "To hell with the Germans!" the task went on methodically until at last all were got away. The gunner of the B.E.F. from whose story this account is compiled tells how, as the last transport steamed away, a Marine turned to him and said reflectively: "Dunkirk! That was a picnic!"

The account of the fighting that concluded on the beaches of St. Valery and Veules-les-Roses is based on articles by Mr. Douglas Williams in the "Daily Telegraph," which subsequently appeared in book form as "The New Contemptibles" (John Murray).

Historic Documents. CXXXI–CXXXVI

ITALY DELIVERS HER STAB IN THE BACK

For nine months after the outbreak of war Mussolini watched events, waiting for the moment when he might advantageously strike at Italy's former allies. On June 10, 1940, he struck, and, although this act of perfidy had been foreseen, it was bitterly condemned not only by Great Britain and France, but by President Roosevelt and statesmen the world over.

MUSSOLINI, IN A SPEECH AFTER THE DECLARATION OF WAR, JUNE 10, 1940:

FIGHTERS of the land, the sea, and the air, Blackshirts of the revolutions and of the legions, men and women of Italy, of the Empire and other kingdom of Albania: Listen!

The hour marked out by destiny is sounding in the sky of our country. This is the hour of irrevocable decisions. The declaration of war has already been handed to the Ambassadors of Britain and France. We are going to war against the plutocratic and reactionary democracies of the West, who have hindered the advance and often threatened the existence even of the Italian people. The events of quite recent history can be summarized in these words: Half-promises, constant threats, blackmail, and finally, as the crown of this ignoble edifice, the League siege of the Fifty-two States.

Our conscience is absolutely tranquil. With you the whole world is witness that the Italy of the Lictor has done what was humanly possible to avoid the hurricane which is overwhelming Europe, but all was in vain.

It would have been enough to revise the treaties, to adapt them to the vital demands of the life of nations, and not to regard them as intangible throughout eternity. It would have been enough not to have persisted in the policy of guarantees, which have shown themselves to have been above all fatal for those who accepted them. It would have been enough not to have rejected the proposal which the Fuehrer made last October, when the Polish campaign came to an end.

But all that belongs to the past. We are today decided to face all the risks and sacrifices of war. A nation is not really great if it does not regard its undertakings as sacred and if it recoils from those supreme trials which decide the course of history.

We are taking up arms, after having solved the problem of our land frontiers, to settle that of our sea frontiers. We want to break off the territorial and military chains which are strangling us in our sea, for a people of 45,000,000 inhabitants is not truly free if it has not free passage over the ocean.

This gigantic struggle is only a phase of the logical development of our revolution. It is the struggle of peoples, poor but rich in workers, against the exploiters, who fiercely hold on to all the wealth and all the gold of the earth. It is the struggle of peoples, of the fruitful and young peoples, against the sterile peoples on the threshold of their decline. It is the struggle between two centuries and two ideas.

No Intention to Involve Other Nations

NOW that the die is cast and we have of our own will burned the bridges behind us, I solemnly declare that Italy does not intend to drag other peoples who are her neighbours by sea and by land into the conflict. Let Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Egypt, and Greece take note of these words of mine, for it will depend entirely upon them if they are fully confirmed or not.

At a memorable meeting—that at Berlin—I said that, according to the law of Fascist morality, when one has a friend one stands by him to the end. We have done that and we shall do it with Germany, with her people and her victorious armed forces.

On the eve of this event of historic importance we address our thoughts to his Majesty, the King-Emperor. And we salute equally the head of allied Greater Germany.

Proletarian and Fascist Italy is for the third time on her feet, strong, proud, and united as she has never been before. We have only one watchword, which is clear-cut and binds everyone. This word is already in the air and is burning in Italian hearts from the Alps to the Indian Ocean: To conquer. We shall conquer, to give at last a long period of peace with justice to Italy, to Europe, to the world.

People of Italy, to arms! Show your tenacity, your courage, your worth.

HITLER, IN A TELEGRAM TO MUSSOLINI, JUNE 10, 1940:

I AM deeply moved by the world-historic decision announced by you today. The thoughts of the whole German people are at this moment with you and your country. The German Army rejoices that it will now fight at the side of the Italian Army. Last September Britain declared war for no reason on Germany. They refused my offer of a peaceful settlement. Your offer of mediation was met with a hard refusal. The increasing disregard of the vital rights of our two peoples by the wielders of power in Britain and France has now brought us finally together. I assure you, Duce, of our indivisible community in the struggle. In true comradeship I send you my heartiest greetings.

MR. DUFF COOPER, MINISTER OF INFORMATION, IN A BROADCAST, JUNE 10, 1940:

MUSSOLINI, Dictator of Italy, has declared war upon the Allies, by whose side Italy fought in the last Great War, and who then, by their efforts, saved Italy from destruction. He has timed the blow with characteristic cowardice and treachery. He has waited for more than nine months. He has waited until France has fought desperately against great odds. At last the opportunity to stab an old friend in the back, in the hour of that friend's greatest peril, has proved too strong a temptation for Mussolini to resist. It will be remembered for generations as one of the vilest acts in history.

It is also very tragic that there is so much that we all like and admire in Italy and the Italian people. We can be quite sure that had they had a democratic system of government which allowed the will of the people to prevail, they never would have entered into this war on the side of their hereditary enemy against their hereditary friends. When a whole nation put their fate into the hands of one bad man they become sooner or later both the accomplices and the victims of his crimes. Today the Italian people are the accomplices of Mussolini. The foolish crowd of young Fascists, who were cheering this afternoon in Rome, little knew the fearful fate that awaits them.

Italy has never won a war without assistance, except against the unfortunate Abyssinians, who were armed with spears against tanks, and with bows and arrows against poison gas. In her struggle for independence in the last century she was assisted at every turn both by Great Britain and by France. It was French soldiers, not Italians, who drove the Austrians out of Italy.

Supposing the impossible were to happen and Germany were to be victorious, the fate of Italy would be even worse. While we should allow the defeated Italy to retain her independence, the victorious Germany would certainly reduce her to the position of a vassal State. But Germany is no more likely to win the war with the assistance of Italy than she was without her. On the contrary, it is more than likely that Italy will prove a liability rather than an asset, as, indeed, she proved to her allies in the last war. After the disgraceful flight of the Italian Army at Caporetto the British and French had to dispatch troops in order to put back some courage in the hearts of the Italians.

No, we need have no fear and, indeed, from one point of view the entry of Italy will prove of immediate assistance. The Italian Peninsula has formed the great gap in our blockade of Germany. Through that tunnel supplies of all kinds have been reaching the enemy. From tonight that tunnel is closed and the effectiveness of the blockade will be increased enormously.

WORLD CENSURE OF MUSSOLINI'S TREACHERY

M. REYNAUD, PRIME MINISTER OF FRANCE, IN A BROADCAST, JUNE 10, 1940:

We are in the sixth day of the greatest battle in history. The conflagration began on the Somme and has extended to the east as far as the Meuse. For six days and five nights our soldiers, our airmen, and the Royal Air Force have been facing an enemy superior in numbers and in armaments.

In this war, which is no longer a war of continuous fronts but a war of strong points grouped in depth, our armies have been manoeuvring in retreat. They did not abandon any strong point until they had inflicted cruel losses on the enemy. The kilometres gained by the enemy are scarred by destroyed tanks and by 'planes brought down.

In spite of their gain in prestige, it remains to be seen what will be the effect of these losses on the issue of the war. In any case, nothing can weaken our will to fight for our land and our liberty. We are ready for the trial which we have to face. Our heads will not be bowed.

This very moment, when France, wounded but valiant and undaunted, is fighting against the hegemony of Germany, when she is fighting for the independence of all other peoples as well as for her own, has been chosen by Signor Mussolini to declare war on us. How shall we judge this act? France has nothing to say. The world which is looking on will pass judgement.

You know what the attitude of the Italian Government was towards our attempts at a *rapprochement* and to our long patience. You know that repeatedly I have publicly followed the lead of my predecessors and said that between us and Italy there are no problems which could not be solved by friendly negotiations.

The highest moral authorities in the world, the Pope and President Roosevelt, have repeatedly tried, but in vain, to prevent this war, which is opposed to the Christian idea and to human solidarity.

Signor Mussolini decided that blood must flow. What was the pretext for this declaration of war? When at 4.30 this afternoon our Ambassador, M. François-Poncet, asked this question of Count Ciano, the latter replied that Signor Mussolini was only carrying out the engagements undertaken by him with Hitler. The same declaration of war was addressed to Britain.

Hostilities will begin tonight at midnight. Force will now speak. In the Mediterranean, even more than anywhere else, the Allies are strong.

France enters this war with a clear conscience. For her this is not a mere word. The world will perhaps soon know that moral forces are also forces. In the course of her long and glorious history France has passed through more severe trials and always astonished the world. France cannot die.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, IN AN ADDRESS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, CHARLOTTESVILLE, JUNE 10, 1940:

The people and Government of the United States have seen with the utmost regret and grave disquiet the decision of the Italian Government to engage in hostilities. More than three months ago Mussolini informed me that, because of Italy's determination to limit the spread of the European conflict as far as might be possible, more than 200,000,000 people in the Mediterranean had been enabled to escape the suffering and devastation of war.

I replied that Italy's desire to prevent the war spreading met with full sympathy on the part of the people and Government of the United States, and I expressed the earnest hope that this policy on Italy's part might be continued. I made it clear that in the opinion of the United States any extension of hostilities in the region of the Mediterranean might result in a still greater enlargement of the scene of conflict in the Near East and Africa, and that if this occurred nobody could foretell how much greater the extension of the war might eventually become.

Subsequently, recognizing that certain Italian aspirations might form a basis for discussions among Powers specifically concerned, I offered to send to the British and French Governments such specific indications of Italy's desires as Mussolini might wish me to transmit. To the regret of humanity, the chief of the Italian Government was unwilling to accept that procedure.

On this tenth day of June, 1940, the hand that held the dagger has stuck it into the back of his neighbour.

On this tenth day of June, 1940, from this University, founded by the great American teacher of democracy, we send forward our prayers and our hopes to those beyond the seas who are maintaining with magnificent valour their battle for freedom.

In American unity we will pursue two obvious and simultaneous courses: We will extend to the opponents of force the material resources of this nation, and harness and speed up the use of those resources in order that we ourselves may have the equipment and training equal to the task in any emergency. All roads leading to these objectives must be kept clear of obstructions. We will not slow down or make a detour. All signs and signals call for Full Speed Ahead.

MR. ATTLEE, IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, JUNE 11, 1940:

As the House knows, Italy has declared war on Britain and France. Hardly ever before in history can the decision to embroil a great nation in war have been taken so wantonly and with so very little excuse. There is no quarrel between the Italians and the British and French peoples.

Since we became a nation we have never fought the Italians. On the other hand, when Italy, so long divided and, to a great extent, enslaved by Germans, sought in the nineteenth century to become a united nation, it was British sympathy and help, and French arms, that enabled her to attain her desires.

Great Britain and France have always been prepared to consider any real grievances that Italy might feel, and right up to this declaration of war have sought in every way to prevent the war spreading to the Mediterranean.

They have been patient under every kind of provocation and abuse. Why, then, has Italy now declared war? Because Signor Mussolini thinks that he sees a chance of securing some spoils at the expense of the Western Democracies.

Signor Mussolini uses the argument of the jackal that senses the possibility of getting some scraps from another beast's kill, the argument of the petty sneak-thief who hopes to rifle the pockets of a murderer's victim. This is the ignoble role that Signor Mussolini has chosen for the great Italian people, which has made such splendid contributions to European civilization in the past.

The victims whose spoils he hoped to share are not dead. The French people, never greater than in adversity, are fighting magnificently by sea, by air, and on their own soil of France. Britain, with all its strength in the air, by sea, and by land, is standing firmly by her side. The Italians, like the Germans, will find they have to meet a resolute resistance. . . . Italy, like Germany, will feel the blockade.

I say we have no ill-will to the Italian people. We are sorry they should be brought to the slaughter on account of the overweening ambition and lust for blood of the Duce, but we are prepared to meet the challenge.

The two Dictators have united to destroy democracy, and democracy will answer the challenge. From across the Atlantic has come the answer of a great democracy. It was as though the day followed the night when only a few hours after the Dictator of Italy had made his dastardly announcement before the serried ranks of the Blackshirts, the President of the U.S.A. sent to the youth of his country a message worthy of a great and free Republic.

Mr. Roosevelt has vitally inspired all the free peoples of Europe. His assurance that the material resources of this great industrial nation will be placed at the disposal of the Allies makes it inevitable that, however hard the road, the cause of civilization will in the end prevail.

Let me say to the House, and to the country, that this new attack does not cause us dismay. It makes no difference to our stern resolution to defeat all our enemies, or to our confidence in our ability to withstand all attacks and to achieve victory.

Chapter 94

ITALY ENTERS THE WAR AT HER CHOSEN MOMENT: FASCIST DIPLOMACY SINCE 1922

Mussolini's Note to Britain and France—Mediterranean Question: 'Via' or 'Vita'?—African Aspirations—Stresa Conference—Laval's Part in the Abyssinian Crime—League Applies 'Sanctions' Against the Aggressor—Mussolini Begins to Support Hitler—Spanish Civil War—Rome-Berlin 'Axis'—Munich and After—Hostile Non-belligerency: Waiting for a Bloodless Conquest—The Irrevocable Step

At 4.30 p.m. on Monday, June 10, 1940, Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, received the French Ambassador and handed him a Note stating: "His Majesty the King and Emperor declares that from to-morrow, June 11, Italy considers herself at war with France." A quarter of an hour later an identical communication was made to the British Ambassador.

That same evening Mussolini addressed the crowd from the Palazzo Venezia [See also page 958]. He called on all to listen to him and said:

"The hour marked out by Destiny is sounding in the sky of our country. This is the hour of irrevocable decisions. The declaration of war has already been handed to the ambassadors of Britain and France. We are going to war against the plutocratic and reactionary democracies of the West, who have hindered the advance and often threatened the existence even of the Italian people."

He described the events of the preceding years as "half-promises, constant threats, blackmail and the League siege of fifty-two states." "Our conscience is absolutely tranquil," he proclaimed. And he further declared that the whole world was witness that Italy had used every endeavour to avoid the cataclysm, but that her efforts had been in vain. He held that a revision of the Treaties and acceptance of Hitler's proposals made in October could have secured peace. Yet that was past history now.

'Sacred Undertakings'

"A nation is not really great if it does not regard its undertakings as sacred," Mussolini proceeded, "and if it recoils from these supreme trials which decide the course of history." Italy was taking up arms to break off the chains "which are strangling us in our sea." This fight was but a logical consequence in the struggle of the oppressed against their exploiters, who would not part with any of the wealth and the gold of the earth which they possessed; it was the struggle of the young and fertile peoples against the sterile ones which were doomed to decline; it was a normal development of Italy's great revolution.

"I solemnly declare," concluded Mussolini, "that Italy does not intend to drag other peoples who are her neighbours into this conflict. Let Switzerland and Yugoslavia, Turkey, Egypt, and Greece take note of these words of mine, for it will depend entirely upon them if they are fully confirmed or not." Finally he emphasized that Italy had only one watchword—to conquer, "and we shall conquer, to give at last a long period of peace with justice to Italy, to Europe, to the world. People of Italy, to arms!"



MUSSOLINI DECLARES WAR

On June 10, 1940, Italy declared herself at war with France and Britain as from the next day. Here Mussolini is addressing a crowd in the Palazzo Venezia that evening.

Photo, Associated Press

Thus Italy's entry into the war—impending for many months—became an accomplished fact. To appreciate the causes and the timing of this "irrevocable decision" taken by Mussolini at a moment when the collapse of France could no longer be doubted, and barely ten days before she was forced to sue for an armistice, it is necessary to place Italy's relations with the Western democracies and Germany against a certain historical background. For years Italian diplomacy had combined the seemingly contradictory methods of exploiting the prestige of victory and the dissatisfaction of defeat. On the one hand, Italy was "revisionist," like Germany or Hungary, whom by the way she greatly encouraged. On the other hand, Italy claimed that her armed forces had achieved great triumphs in the war—indeed, that they had saved France. The Italians held that they had been "swindled" by Britain and France in the Peace settlement after 1914-18, and that Italy had been allotted much less than her proper share in the spoils.

The fact is that by the London Treaty of April 26, 1915, Great Britain and France had promised Italy "equitable" compensation in case they themselves were to increase their colonial possessions in Africa at Germany's expense. Article 13 of that Treaty, which was extremely vague in its wording, did, however, refer specifically to frontier "rectification" in Libya, Jubaland and Eritrea. What Italy got eventually, and after much argument, was rather insignificant.

Enmity to Britain

At the time it seemed as if it were largely a case of a new form being given to the perennial Franco-Italian rivalry—as if the old prestige conflict between these two adjoining Latin countries were at the bottom of it all. Yet in the light of more recent developments it is permissible to hold that the real, deep enmity of Mussolini's Italy, like that of Hitler's Germany, was reserved for Great Britain, and that hostility towards France was only a minor issue. Britain's domination of the Mediterranean caused as much rancour with Mussolini as the existence and power of the British Commonwealth of Nations had done for many decades with the Germans. The Italians have a neat formula that sums up the situation. They say that to the British the Mediterranean means but a road ("Via"), while to Italy it means life ("Vita"), and that therefore they must obtain control of so vital an area.

Be this as it may, during the first twelve years of the Fascist dictatorship in Italy—1922 to 1934—relations with France were for the most part strained,

while those with Britain bore, at least outwardly, a friendly appearance. The Italians seemed to have so many things to demand of France by way of "reparations" that they could never be induced to formulate the nature of their claims. But in 1934 the international scene began to undergo far-reaching and dramatic changes. On February 6 of that year the Stavisky riots took place in Paris, which altered the political situation in France overnight. Within barely a week of that event—namely on February 12—Dollfuss, Austria's diminutive Chancellor, launched the police and the Heimwehr (a private army organized as a Fascist militia) against the workmen of Vienna, abolished the constitution, and proclaimed a "Christian dictatorship" in its place. This act of suicidal folly was taken under Mussolini's guidance and inspiration. From then onwards the Austrian government was entirely dependent on Italy's support, and Mussolini propped up Dollfuss because he did not want Austria to be swallowed by the increasingly active Hitler. On June 30 the first sensational "purge" took place in Berlin, when Roehm, Schleicher, and many others were brutally murdered by Hitler. Less than a month afterwards, on July 25, Dollfuss was assassinated by Hitler's hirelings in Vienna. The whole of Europe was shaken and worried, but especially France.

Barthou, one of the most experienced and vigorous Foreign Ministers the French have ever had, developed great activity in a somewhat belated attempt to strengthen his country's international position in the face of the growing German danger. Among the measures envisaged by him was the improvement



FRANCO-ITALIAN PACT
M. Laval (on the left) is seen above signing at Rome, on January 7, 1935, a Franco-Italian protocol by which certain territorial concessions were made by France to Italy in North Africa, extending the frontiers of Italian Libya. There is reason to think that Laval also discussed with Mussolini (on extreme right) other and more weighty matters.
Photo, Keystone

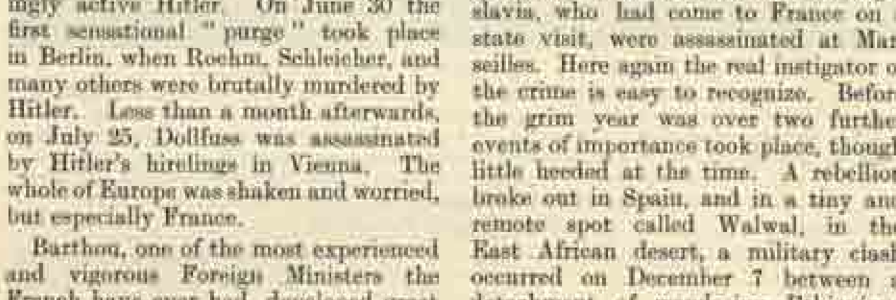
of relations with Italy. But in October Barthou and King Alexander of Yugoslavia, who had come to France on a state visit, were assassinated at Marseilles. Here again the real instigator of the crime is easy to recognize. Before the grim year was over two further events of importance took place, though little heeded at the time. A rebellion broke out in Spain, and in a tiny and remote spot called Walwal, in the East African desert, a military clash occurred on December 7 between a detachment of wandering Ethiopians and an Italian outpost. With this the scene for the coming European drama was finally set.

In January, 1935, M. Laval, the Premier of France and also Barthou's successor as Foreign Minister, went to Rome to have some personal negotiations with Mussolini with a view to settling the old disputes between Italy and France, and to securing Mussolini as an ally against Germany. The visit lasted a few days, and resulted in a number of small concessions and also in territorial adjustments in Africa to be made by France in Italy's favour. There is reason to believe, however, that Mussolini and Laval had discussed something else, and that the French Premier, in consideration for Mussolini's support in Europe, had promised the Italian dictator a free hand in Abyssinia.

Designs on Ethiopia

We know now that Mussolini had been preparing for the conquest of an African empire since 1933, and that at the time of Laval's visit to Rome his decision to begin the campaign in the autumn of that year (1935) was already taken; indeed, that the Walwal incident was a deliberate prelude to this contemplated aggression. Laval was preoccupied with the Germans—not the Ethiopians. And so were the British, whom Mussolini also consulted, and who gave a non-committal reply. The Italian dictator, therefore, began to ship troops and supplies to Somaliland and Eritrea, his two colonies bordering on Ethiopia. Britain and France, who control the Suez Canal and must therefore have been aware of these troop movements, raised no objection.

Meanwhile, there burst like a bombshell upon Paris Hitler's defiant declaration on March 16, abolishing the disarmament clauses of the Versailles Treaty and proclaiming his intention to rearm Germany at full speed. British



THE STRESA CONFERENCE
Seen left to right above, during the Stresa Conference in April, 1935, are Laval, Mussolini, Ramsay MacDonald and Flandin. This three-power conference of Great Britain, France and Italy had as its object the collective maintenance of peace within the framework of the League of Nations, and it condemned the unilateral repudiation of treaties by Germany.
Photo, Keystone





ITALIANS IN ABYSSINIA AND IN SPAIN

When in 1935 the Italians embarked upon their conquest of Abyssinia, their engineers speedily made smooth the path for the men and guns and motor-lorries, despite the rough nature of the terrain and the almost total lack of roads. This photograph shows the evening assembly during the construction of the Imperial Highway between Dessie and Addis Ababa, the Abyssinian capital. On the left is a group of Italians taken prisoner in Spain by the Government side after the rout of the Nationalists at Guadalajara; they are seen in a Madrid dungeon.

Photos, Mondiale; Wide World

and French diplomats were confused, travelling from capital to capital in pursuit of a riposte to the Fuehrer. Eventually they decided to hold a conference at Stresa, on the Italian Lake Maggiore, and there it was that the representatives of Britain, France and Italy passed a number of resolutions about disarmament and the settlement of European affairs. But the important fact about the Stresa Conference is that once again Mussolini inquired from France and Britain about their attitude towards his contemplated African campaign, and that once again their ambiguous reply justified his belief that the Western democracies would raise no objections to his aggression against the Ethiopians.

Then Britain made a naval agreement with Hitler which exasperated the French, who, for their part, followed it up by a military agreement with Stalin. The League of Nations at Geneva, to which the Abyssinian Emperor, Haile Selassie, was making continuous and vain appeals against the coming Italian invasion, was reduced to a mere farce. But, all of a sudden, it began to look as if Britain were now determined to make the League an effective and powerful instrument for maintaining international law and order. Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Foreign Secretary, stated in Geneva on September 11, 1935, that "the League stands, and my country stands with it, for the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety and particularly for steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression."

Yet on the very eve of making this speech Sir Samuel Hoare had agreed with Laval that in no circumstances would Britain and France take military measures against Italy or close the Suez Canal or do anything else "that might lead to war." Mussolini must have known this, but in any case he attached no great importance to Geneva's verbiage. On October 2 he proclaimed national mobilization in Italy, and next day the invasion of Abyssinia began.

Ineffective 'Sanctions'

Whereupon, under Britain's leadership, fifty-two nations represented at Geneva decided to apply economic "sanctions" to the aggressor. The Western democracies saw to it, however, that these sanctions did not include the one measure which might have stopped Mussolini's war: an embargo on oil and coal, the essential fuels of which Italy possessed none. The only result of the sanctions policy was to infuriate the Italians and to rally round Mussolini the latently anti-Fascist elements which had been opposed to the war.

Finally, Great Britain chose to abandon the situation she had herself created, and to drop both the sanctions and collective security which these were supposed to promote and represent. This gave the impression that the sending of the British Home Fleet to the Mediterranean had been but an idle threat. Mussolini won his war against the Abyssinians, but he never forgave Britain for the part she had taken in mobilizing world opinion against

him—nor France for not openly dissociating herself from this British policy.

The inglorious behaviour of the British and French Governments in this Abyssinian affair convinced Mussolini that there was nothing to be gained from siding with the Western democracies. Meanwhile, Hitler had achieved a series of further spectacular and provocative successes against them. The Duce had not previously had very much regard for Hitler, whom he once described as "that garrulous monk," and for a while he had even acted in open opposition to the Fuehrer, going as far as sending Italian troops to the Brenner Pass when a German invasion of Austria seemed imminent. But the situation had changed since those days. And Hitler, who in the various stages of his career had appeared to Mussolini as a disciple, as a rival, and even as a danger to Italy, now began to assume the character of a quite desirable satellite.

A shrewd and clear-sighted politician, Mussolini was a complete cynic and opportunist. He had known how to balance himself between two parties in such a manner as to get something out of both. And he never concealed his determination to tilt the scales to the advantage of the stronger party. Without forsaking the possibility of "selling out" to Britain and France if a suitable occasion were to arise, he began to cooperate closely with Hitler. In July, 1936, civil war broke out in Spain. General Franco led the revolt against the Spanish Republican Government. Both Hitler and Mussolini had realized for a long time that a dictatorship in Spain, established with their support and sympathetic to them, would be of immense advantage to Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, while at the same time constituting an open threat to Britain and France. So from the start Hitler and Mussolini openly gave their support to General Franco.

Once again the democracies shut their eyes to the real issue and wasted time in futile tergiversations. Not only was Mussolini shipping whole divisions of Italian "volunteers" to Spain, but his submarines were torpedoing British and French ships. On the other hand, the Germans used the Spanish war for testing out their latest 'planes, tanks, and other weapons. Apart from one half-hearted move—the convening in September, 1937, of the Nyon Conference to decide on a course of retaliation against the "pirate" submarines in the Mediterranean (Italy and Germany did not attend)—the Western democracies showed little capacity for action of any kind. Hitler and Mussolini, who had now come together so closely that they constituted the so-called Rome-Berlin Axis, felt they had them "on the run," and proceeded to behave accordingly.

During the whole of 1938 and 1939 the initiative in all European developments rested with the Axis. The continuous "appeasement" efforts of



ITALY'S VITAL NEED

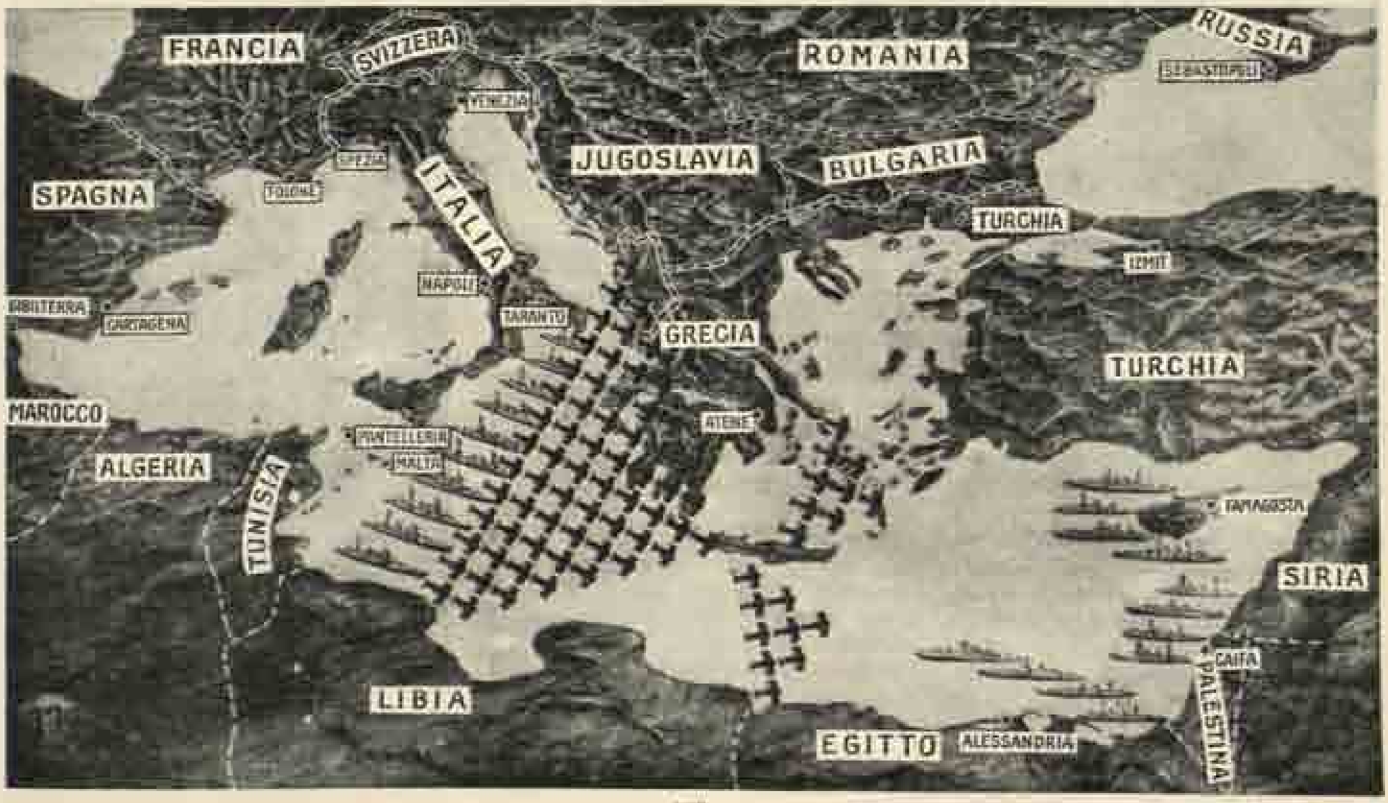
Since Italy is not a coal-producing country, her sources of supply in war are restricted to those of her Axis partner. Above, truck-loads of German coal are seen passing over the Brenner Pass on the way to Italy. In quality it could not compare with British coal.

Photo, Keystone

FASCIST WISHFUL THINKING

The map below was published by the Italian newspaper "Il Tevere." According to the caption it "proves beyond all doubt" that Italy would be successful in destroying the Allied Mediterranean Fleet. Events showed that Mussolini's trust in his air arm had been over-optimistic.

Photo, Wide World





On September 3, 1939, the Western democracies declared war on Germany. From that very day Mussolini quite openly and avowedly behaved not like a neutral, but like Hitler's ally. A formula was coined: hostile, yet "non-belligerent." There can be no doubt that during the months that followed Italy rendered the greatest services to Germany. Her territory constituted the biggest hole in the British blockade, especially the port of Trieste. Her embassies and legations, her newspaper correspondents abroad, her large resident colonies in various parts of the world were openly helping Hitler. Meanwhile, in Italy herself military preparations were proceeding apace under German direction. The Army was put in readiness; the Fleet and the Air Force were groomed for action. Stocks of essential raw materials and supplies were accumulated. Government spokesmen and the Press were whipping up a campaign of frenzied hatred and contempt against Britain and France, of admiration for Hitler's Germany.

Still official circles in London and Paris tried to shut their eyes and go on "appeasing." They were obsessed by the idea of Mussolini possibly proving "useful" at some future date, and therefore ignored all these hostile manifestations. Repeatedly they even offered to negotiate on the French question, and France asked more than once what it was that Mussolini actually wanted—for he had never covered with his own personal authority the "spontaneous" demands for Nice, Tunis, and Corsica. The Italians arrogantly replied that they would only talk to a defeated France.

In May, 1940, the position began to look so threatening that British shipping had to be diverted from the Mediterranean to the long route round the Cape. Yet official circles in London





STUDENTS' DEMONSTRATIONS IN ROME

Incited by the Fascist press, Italian students in May, 1940, staged many demonstrations against Britain and France. Above, some of them are seen racing across the Piazza Venezia in Rome, waving an Italian flag. Below, the British Embassy in Rome guarded by Italian soldiers and police against demonstrators. Top, left, Sir Noel Charles, British Counsellor at Rome at that time.

Photos, Universal; Associated Press

Britain and France resulted only in fresh demands by the predatory Powers each time an attempt was made to placate them. Mr. Chamberlain negotiated and signed a treaty with Italy whose purpose was to re-establish friendly relations in the Mediterranean area. So confident was the British Premier of his success that he declared he would "eat his hat" if this failed to materialize. But it did fail to materialize. Nevertheless, at Munich the British and French Governments affected to see in Mussolini an impartial arbiter, or even a friend, instead of their bitterest foe who was merely biding his time.

continued to indulge in "sunshine" talk, and the inspired Press echoed their quite astonishing optimism. The Italian papers, on the other hand, were openly jubilant at the Allied fiasco in Norway. Their "Schadenfreude" and their abuse of Britain knew no bounds. On May 18 the "Popolo d'Italia" said, "We consider ourselves in fact as having already intervened," and the following day Count Ciano declared, "Italy cannot remain absent from the present terrible struggle which will forge the destinies of the world." Nevertheless, that very same Count Ciano was having frequent conferences with Sir Noel Charles, the British Counsellor in Rome, while the Italian Ambassador in London was also having talks with Lord Halifax.

On May 20 the German General von Epp arrived in Rome and also a Japanese official trade mission. Three days later, despite all that had happened, Sir Wilfrid Greene, the Master of the Rolls, also arrived in Rome, in order (it was explained) to renew his contacts with the Italian Government as Chairman of the British Delegation to the Anglo-Italian Joint Standing Committee. This committee was set up at the beginning of the war to provide convenient machinery for the discussion between the British and Italian Governments of economic matters. In spite of the astonishingly lenient treatment of Italy in the matter of the British blockade, the intention was to relax it still further as a friendly gesture. The British Press was full of optimistic statements about the progress of these economic talks.

Ill-timed British Mission

During the days that followed the final preparations were being made for a decisive action. On May 26, in the presence of Marshal Graziani and the Under-Secretary for War, Mussolini received the leaders of Italian industry and gave them his orders with regard to artillery construction. Later he had a conference with the army commanders and the heads of the mobilization department of the War Ministry. On the same day the text was published of the Bill to "control citizens in wartime." Different duties, civilian and military, were apportioned to all male citizens from fourteen to seventy, and special services were made obligatory for women between fourteen and sixty. To save petrol the use of private motor-cars was prohibited as from June 1.

Two of Mussolini's most frequently used "mouthpieces" made statements. Speaking at Florence, Farinacci said, "the place of Italy is by the side of the heroic Germany of Hitler, which is struggling against the common enemy."

Gayda declared in his newspaper that Italy had forced the Allies to keep 1,200,000 men on her borders or on those of her colonies.

"This is solid, silent help which Italy has given Germany during these eight months of war."



MARSHAL BADOGLIO

Marshal Pietro Badoglio (above), Chief of the Italian General Staff until December, 1940, was created Duke of Addis Ababa for his services during the Abyssinian war.
Photo, Wide World



CATHOLIC MOUTHPIECE

Count Della Torre (above) earned the enmity of the Fascist newspapers by his unbiased reports of the international situation in the Vatican newspaper "Osservatore Romano," of which he was director.
Photo, Wide World



MONARCH GREETS DICTATOR

Above, the nominal ruler of Italy, King Victor Emmanuel III (left), shakes hands with the virtual ruler, Benito Mussolini.
Photo, Wide World

On May 31 it was announced that the Italian Government had broken off the economic negotiations initiated by Sir Wilfrid Greene, and on the following day "Relazioni Internationali" said:

"The moment we have been waiting for for fifty years has arrived. The Italian people will fight their French and British enemies with greatest determination until complete victory. It is not logical that France and Britain should have political power in the Mediterranean and thus exercise control over the development of the Italian nation."

Italy's eyes were turned towards Nice, Corsica, Tunis and the Suez Canal, said that same journal.

"The word is now for the forces of land, sea and sky of Fascist Italy . . . we have no scruples."

On June 4 M. Reynaud, the French Prime Minister, made a statement about relations with Italy which still left the door open for negotiations. But it was quite clear that Mussolini had by now reached his "irrevocable decision" and was only watching the tragic "battle of France" to choose the moment when he could stab the French in the back with a minimum of risk. On June 10 he declared war and assumed the duties of supreme commander of Italy's armed forces, while the actual command of the army was delegated to Marshal Badoglio. The last act of this tragic farce was a proclamation issued on June 11 by the King of Italy, who said that he joined the ranks of the armed forces, "thereby following the dictates of my heart and the traditions of my house."

Mussolini's Mind Made Up

Chapter 95

FROM THE MARNE TO THE LOIRE: CLOSING STAGES OF THE BATTLE OF FRANCE

Germans Cross the Marne and the Seine—Paris an Open Town—A New B.E.F. Lands in France—The Nazis Occupy Paris—Maginot Line Pierced—Reynaud Resigns, and Pétain Asks for an Armistice—Where the French Armies Stood at Bay—Armistice Signed with Germany, but Mussolini Launches an Attack—Franco-Italian Armistice—A Summing Up

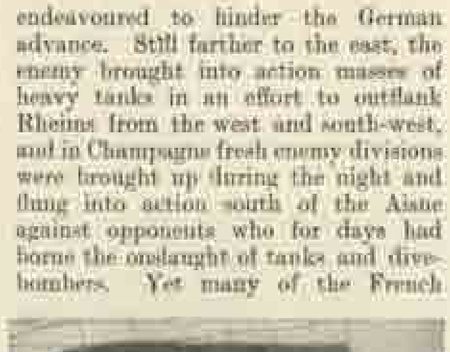
When at midnight on June 10 France was faced by the threat of an Italian attack in the Alps, the German troops were rapidly converging on Paris. The Weygand Zone had been completely overrun. The Somme and the Aisne had both been left far behind by the tide of battle, which now swept on towards the Marne; even the Seine had been crossed in many places by the German armoured units. Nazi tanks had made their appearance in the suburbs of Rouen; Soissons had fallen, and Rheims was threatened. The invaders had passed Beauvais; and here, where the thrust was deepest, they were only 25 or 30 miles from the outskirts of Paris.

Obviously, the capital was doomed, and on June 10 the French Government left for Tours. At the same time, the headquarters of the army were transferred from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, east of Meaux, to Briare on the Loire, some 80 miles to the south of Paris.

Doomed Capital

By June 11 the plight of the French armies along the line from the coast to Malmédy had become much worse. Out of the 43 infantry divisions which had been in place on June 4 at least nine had been practically wiped out, twelve had been reduced to a quarter of their strength, and eleven cut down to half by casualties suffered since the opening of the German invasion. This left nine regular and nine light divisions at something like full strength. The 6th Army was along the Marne; on its left, in front of Rheims, was the 4th Army, extended to Monthois. The line east to Longuyon should have been continued by the 2nd Army, but in fear of envelopment its commander had drawn back to Grandpré and Dun-sur-Meuse, leaving a gap. Covering Paris on the north was the French 7th Army, between Chantilly and the Ourcq.

The battle, now in its eighth day, raged furiously along the whole front. The Germans were across the Seine at several points near Rouen. To the east of the Oise, the main body of the defenders was already in full retreat to the Marne, and only a rearguard endeavoured to hinder the German advance. Still farther to the east, the enemy brought into action masses of heavy tanks in an effort to outflank Rheims from the west and south-west, and in Champagne fresh enemy divisions were brought up during the night and flung into action south of the Aisne against opponents who for days had borne the onslaught of tanks and dive-bombers. Yet many of the French troops were still fighting magnificently and the Germans were said to show signs of strain. If the attack could be held for two or three days longer, all might yet be saved: that was the optimistic picture conveyed in official communiqués from Paris.



FLIGHT FROM PARIS

As the German soldiers drew nearer to Paris thousands fled from the city, and the roads southward were soon congested with masses of vehicles like those above, in which families had piled up belongings in frantic haste.

Photo, Associated Press

But Hitler was resolved to give his enemy no respite. The next day, June 12, so far from showing any signs of slackening, the Germans accentuated their efforts on the Seine in an endeavour to extend the bridgeheads which they had already established on the south bank of the river. Violent attacks were directed against the French holding the line west of Meaux, and on the Marne, near Château-Thierry, the enemy again made contact with the main French forces and obtained a footing on the opposite bank.

At Rheims, new tank and motorized units—report spoke of an entire mechanized corps, comprising three or four armoured divisions and two or three motorized divisions—were thrown into the struggle, and the French, wearied by the strain of constant battle, and outnumbered, were again forced to withdraw. The German communiqué spoke of numerous French counter-attacks in Champagne, some of them supported by tanks, but it claimed—and, as it turned out, with truth—that all their efforts were unable to bring the German advance to a standstill. Rouen, it went on to state, had been in German hands for several days; and so, too, was Compiègne, "scene of the humiliating Armistice dictated in 1918"; the Seine below Paris had been crossed at several points, and an Allied force of 20,000 men—later stated to include two brigades of the British 51st Division—had been surrounded at the little port of St. Valery; a great number of transports had been taken, together with quantities of arms and war material, "which cannot, at present, even be estimated." At the nearest point the Germans were only 12½ miles from Paris.

French Retreat Continues

Meanwhile, in the Alps all was quiet. The first Italian communiqué of the war, issued on the morning of June 11, merely stated that: "At midnight on June 10 the prearranged disposition of our land, sea, and air forces was carried out in perfect order."

Within the next 24 hours the situation worsened. On both sides of Paris the battle increased in violence, as, on the one hand, motorized and armoured columns crossed the Seine at the bridgeheads established at Louviers, Les Andelys and Vernon, and, on the other, pushed across the Marne near Château-Thierry, while other divisions

swept past Rheims, which by now was in German hands, and drove rapidly in the direction of Châlons-sur-Marne. What was still more ominous, the German left wing, by attacking between Vouziers and Montmédy, was threatening to turn the Maginot Line, the only part of the French front which still remained intact.

Already the French Cabinet, meeting on June 12 in a château near Tours, had been informed by General Weygand that the situation was desperate, and that application for an armistice was well-nigh unavoidable. Not a whisper of this was allowed to appear in the Press as yet, but even the most confirmed and deluded optimist must have grasped the significance of the announcement made on the morning of June 13, that, with a view to saving it from destruction by air bombardment, Paris was now an open town. The military governor, General Hering, who had been in charge since the departure of the Government, now handed over his command to General Dentz, while he himself assumed an army command at the front. The police and firemen were ordered to stay at their posts, and though no orders were given to evacuate the city, the pitiful exodus of refugees increased in volume. A sinister silence had descended upon the city, so lately gay and bustling; the streets were deserted, the newspapers failed to appear, and only the most guarded announcements were made over the wireless. Even the skies were darkened by the smoke drifting slowly from the zone of battle, now come so near.





U.S. SHRINE IN FRANCE

This monument at Château-Thierry was erected after the war of 1914-18 in memory of the American soldiers who fell in France. Reached by the Germans on June 12, 1940, Château-Thierry was again reduced to ruins, as the photograph on the left testifies. The monument, however, was undamaged.

Photos, Associated Press

Before the day closed the French were heartened by a renewal of the British pledge to give the utmost aid in their power to their ally and, still more, by the news that a new B.E.F. had gone to France. "South of the Seine," read an official announcement issued in London, "fresh British troops recently arrived from the United Kingdom, and have taken their place in the line with their French comrades." It went on to add that "the fine bearing and march discipline of these troops has had an excellent effect and has done much to maintain the morale of the Allied troops, who have been fighting day and night to stem the German advance." This new B.E.F. was reported to be magnificently equipped with artillery of the latest type and with large numbers of anti-aircraft guns; and though the troops were, for the most part, newly-trained men, all the officers and the majority of the staffs had been through the fire at Dunkirk and come out smiling.

'Bursting to Get At the Enemy'

"First-class British troops have been rolling up along French roads towards the Seine during the last few days," wrote "Eye-Witness" on June 14. "Let me say right away that, in the words of a sergeant-major of a Scottish regiment whom I saw just behind the Seine front this afternoon, these men of the new force are 'bursting to get at the enemy.' These fresh fighting men may play an important part in the present critical stage of the war in France. I found the soldiers of the new force at the front filled with admiration for the long fight by a division [presumably the 51st (Highland) Division] which was fighting continuously for five weeks before part of it was captured. They besieged me with questions about it. Many of them were old soldiers with rugged, lined faces who knew all about the division. 'Aye, domned fine lads, yon division,' men of a Scottish regiment said. The officers and men of the Seine force are in excellent spirits. They know they have been flung into the battle in the face of a great German army which has advanced steadily for five weeks. This has not rattled them at all. They know they have a stiff job to do, and they are going to do it. Now they are in contact with the Germans who have forced the Lower Seine at several bridgeheads. Like the men of Scotland,

they will hold their positions in face of any odds."

But this British aid arrived too late to be of any real effectiveness in turning the tide of battle; a Canadian division, although it was actually landed in Normandy while the Battle of the Somme was still in progress, was unable to take any part in the actual fighting, and was afterwards evacuated, not without difficulty, from France's west coast ports.

At the same time, the help rendered by the Royal Air Force was of the very greatest value. Enemy concentrations advancing to take their places in the line were heavily bombed; convoys were wrecked, mechanized columns scattered, road junctions blocked, ammunition and supply dumps blown up and destroyed, woods and fields set ablaze. From the first days of the battle, when the men of the R.A.F. were given the task of blowing up the bridges across the Meuse which French inefficiency had left intact, until the last, when France was in collapse, Britain's air arm did magnificent service to the common cause.

By this time the Germans were boasting that the second phase of the gigantic campaign in the West had been victoriously concluded. "The resistance of the French Northern Front has broken down; the Seine has been crossed over a wide area below Paris, and Le Havre has been taken. The enemy is retreating along the entire front extending from Paris to the Maginot Line at Sedan. German tanks and motorized divisions have in several places overtaken and pierced the retreating enemy columns. In the retreat the enemy has abandoned his entire equipment"—these are passages taken from a communiqué issued by the German High Command on June 14. Then the communiqué proceeded to announce that the defences of Paris had been overrun by the German infantry, that the French were no longer able to defend their capital, and that the victorious German troops had actually marched into Paris.

Telephoning from Paris to his colleague, Mr. A. Drexel Biddle, in Tours at 7 o'clock on the evening of June 13, Mr. William Bullitt, U.S. Ambassador to France, announced that the German army were inside the gates of Paris.

This was a little premature, however, for that night the Germans halted at the outer suburbs of the capital. According to a German account, Nazi officers sent "an open message over the radio" demanding the surrender of the city, in which case it would be treated as a non-belligerent zone; following this they attempted to get into touch with the military authorities in the city under a flag of truce. But this effort failed because the German delegates were fired on by mistake by Senegalese troops holding the gates. An American report has it that it was Mr. Bullitt who, at the request of General Dentz, transmitted to the German Government in Berlin the formal notification that the city had been declared open and that all the garrison had been withdrawn.

Surrender of Paris Demanded



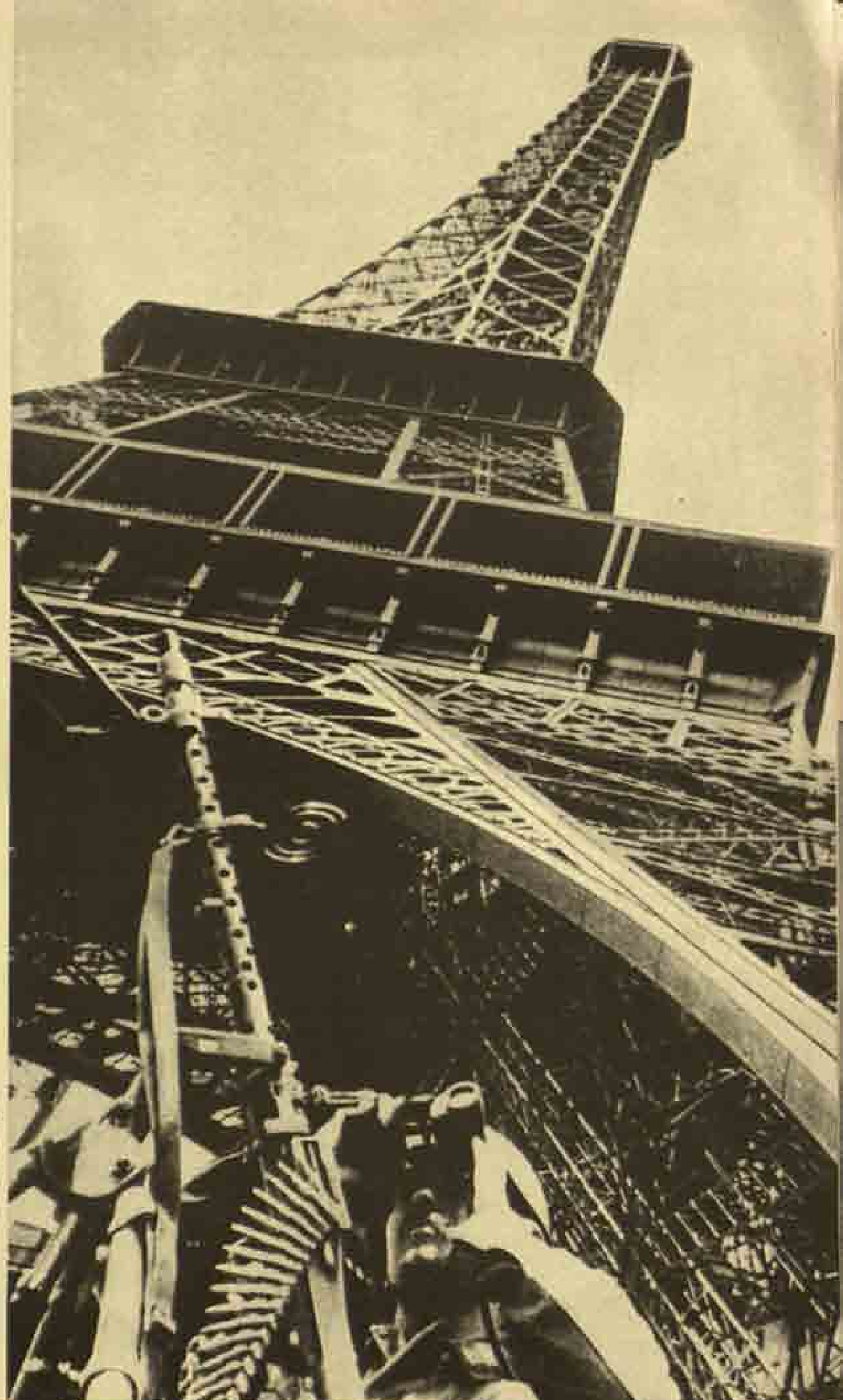
WHEN THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WAS AT TOURS

E.N.A.

On June 10, 1940, the French Government left Paris for Tours, Paris remaining in charge of the military authorities. Above, M. Reynaud is seen outside the château near Tours which became the temporary seat of the Government, examining documents handed to him by M. Baudouin, his Under-Secretary. On the left is General Weygand; in the background, Marshal Pétain.

So the night passed, in a state of gloomy expectancy. Hundreds of thousands, some accounts said millions, of the Parisian population had sought safety in flight, and those who remained kept within doors. The main boulevards, the café terraces, the great squares, the famous shopping streets—all now were practically deserted; on the city of light had fallen a gross darkness. Now and again the fateful silence was broken by the dull boom of explosions as one or other of the armament factories on the outskirts were destroyed by Government order. The leaden sky was reddened by fires.

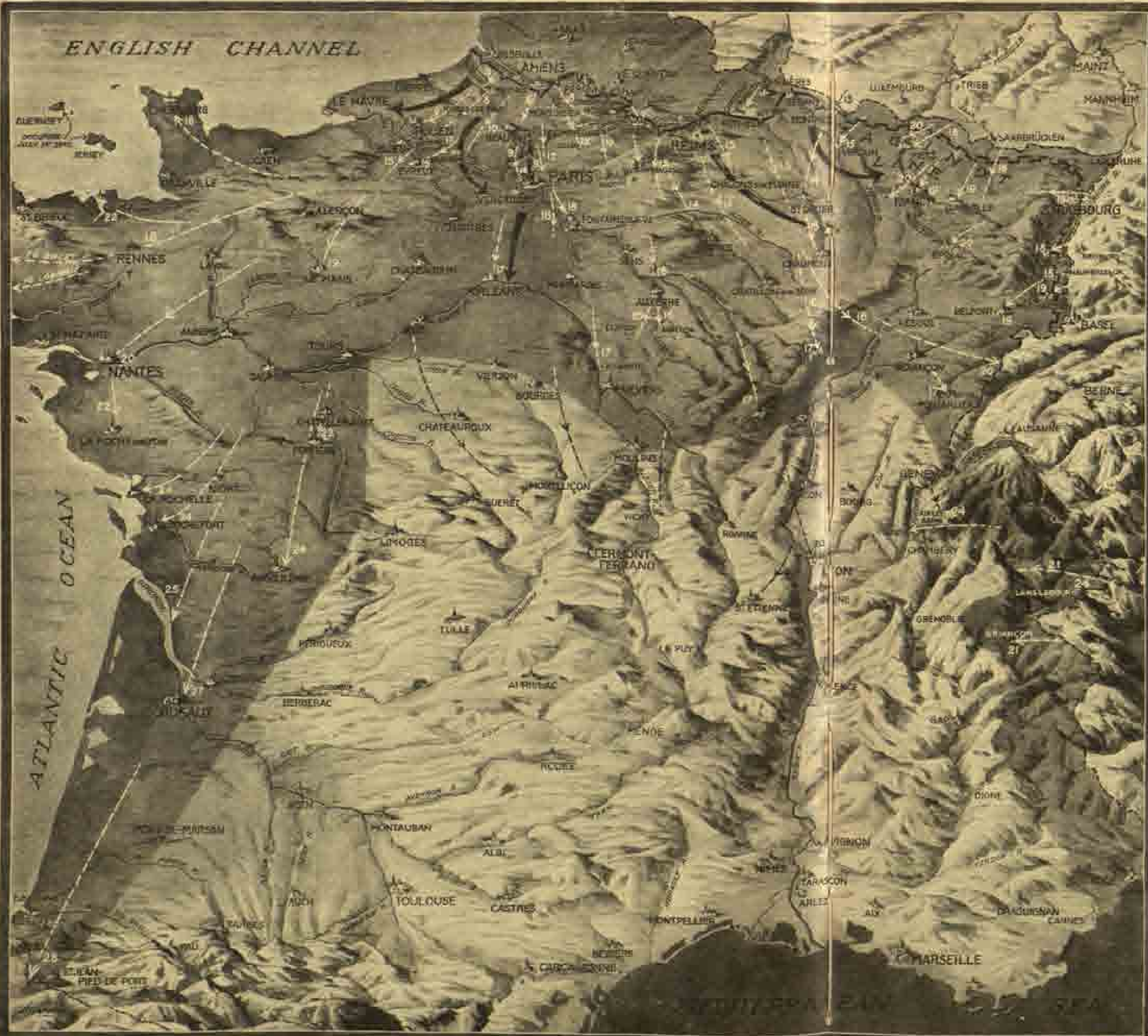
At midnight the city gates were shut and barred by civil guards, and those of the refugees who had not succeeded in making their exit perforce returned to their homes. The police were now instructed to hand in their arms to their superiors so as to become a purely civilian force. In a state of anxious suspense Paris awaited the arrival of the conquerors.



EIFFEL TOWER IN GERMAN HANDS

On June 14, 1940, German troops entered Paris once more after a lapse of 70 years. In this photograph a Nazi anti-aircraft gunner is seen on the look-out at the foot of the Eiffel Tower, for so many years used by the French as a wireless station.

Photo, Associated Press



RELIEF MAP SHOWING GERMAN THRUSTS INTO FRANCE, WITH APPROXIMATE DATES (June 5-28)



A German tank fording the River Ourcq in the middle of June, 1940. In many places the Germans used lines of tanks as bridges to permit passage of troops.



Bomb craters near Verdun, whose fortresses were the scene of heroic French resistance throughout the war of 1914-18. It fell into German hands on June 15, 1940.



FRANCE IN THE HANDS OF THE NAZIS

The outskirts of Strasbourg, showing one of the bridges blown up by the French before they evacuated the city. Left, this map of France shows, with the approximate dates, the German thrusts into the interior. The black arrows indicate the axes of the main German thrusts. The darker portion shows the occupied territory as laid down in the Franco-German and Franco-Italian armistice terms.

Relief Map specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Felix Gardon. Photos, Keystone, Associated Press, E.N.A.*



Photo: Associated Press

PARIS REMAINED UNDAMAGED BUT HUMILIATED

Passing across the vast *Place de la Concorde* in Paris, where once so many Frenchmen were guillotined during the Revolution which sought to uphold the 'Rights of Man,' Nazi invaders are watched in silence by a crowd of Frenchmen who have been betrayed by politicians to whom the 'Rights of Man' were of less account than power and money. Haunted by memories of the 'Commune,' the Government preferred to hand over Paris intact to the enemy rather than see its resistance organized by 'the people.'

Soon after 7 a.m. the first German troops—some motor-cyclists armed with rifles and machine-guns—entered the city and took up their positions just inside the boundary near the Aubervilliers Gate; but it was three hours later that the main body began their march into Paris. Column by column they goose-stepped through the streets, past houses and shops closed and shuttered. Here and there a handful of civilians stood on the pavements to watch the traditional enemy enter Paris for the second time in seventy years; others with heavy hearts and downcast faces peered cautiously from between the drawn blinds. One of the first places to be secured was the wireless station of Radio Paris, and shortly afterwards the swastika flag was run up on the Eiffel Tower.

All day long the city resounded with the noise of tanks rumbling past the Arc de Triomphe down the Champs Elysées to the Place de la Concorde, with the dull tramp of the marching infantry, the clatter and rattle of innumerable transport vehicles. Machine-gun posts were established at the street corners and other vantage points; then the soldiers bivouacked in the streets and squares prior to being billeted in the public buildings and great hotels. By nightfall numbers of the Nazi soldiery were wandering about the city, gazing in the shop windows filled with the things that they never saw now in the Reich, staring at the splendour which they had been told so much about, and which now had become their prey. Only a few of the cafés remained open, and from 9 p.m. the strictest curfew was enforced; for the first time Paris's black-out was really complete. The only sound in the hours of dark was the tramp of the German sentries and the unceasing rattle of men and vehicles as German detachments crossed the city on their way to the battle now raging beyond its southern suburbs.

Nazi Tanks in Paris Streets

That day's communiqué from French G.H.Q. was couched in pregnant phraseology. "On both sides of Paris," it read, "the enemy pushed still further. Owing to this advance the troops covering Paris retreated on both sides of the town in accordance with orders received. In refraining from direct defence of the capital, which is now an open town, the French command aimed at sparing it the devastation which defence would have involved. The Command considered that no valuable strategic result justified the sacrifice of Paris." Looking back, it is now clear that when Paris fell France lost heart; but still for a week and more the fighting went on. Yet the situation looked hopeless, with the German armies across the Seine, heading in the direction of the Loire, while to the east the defences in Champagne had been shattered and the Maginot Line turned.

Having turned down General Weygand's suggestion of asking for an armistice, the French Government had now to take drastic steps to save the armies from encirclement. It was decided on June 12 to abandon the Maginot Line, in whose fortresses the garrisons were left, and to withdraw southwards. The remnant of the 10th Army was forced back upon Rennes, leaving a gap between Evreux and Passy through which the enemy advanced to Dreux by the 14th. In the centre a wedge was driven through the 6th Army, while the 2nd Army, on the right, was bent back upon the Ornain. French troops returned from Norway had been landed at Brest on the 15th to hold a line between the port and Rennes.

The 7th Army had been marshalled for the defence of the capital, together with the Army of Paris under General Héring. When Paris was declared an open town (on the 13th) these armies fell back towards the Loire. Five days later the enemy reached this river to the west of Orléans, but on the 17th Marshal



NAZIS IN THE HEART OF PARIS

The famous Place de la Concorde, in Paris, normally one of the busiest spots of the French capital, is seen here almost deserted as detachments of Nazi troops move across it. This photograph, radio'd from New York to Paris, shows the sandbagged base of the Luxor Obelisk on the left, and the Eiffel Tower on the right.

Photo, Associated Press

Pétain had opened negotiations with the German High Command.

The communiqué issued on the night of Sunday, June 16, stated that enemy attacks had been renewed on the whole battle front, and it was now admitted that part at least of the Maginot Line had been evacuated owing to the progress made by the German sweep to the west. Following the break-through in Champagne, the enemy delivered a fanwise advance whose most spectacular achievement was the capture, on June 15, of Verdun, that great fortress which in 1916 became the symbol of France's will to win. In this war a few days sufficed to bring about its fall. In 1940 they *did* pass at Verdun.

Once again it was reported that during the last 24 hours the battle had reached a new high point of intensity. The enemy, possessed as he was of an enormous superiority in troops and material, was constantly throwing fresh reserves into the fight; 150 divisions, it was estimated, were now engaged in the battle on the Western Front, and even the forces in occupation of Poland had been denuded in order that the German strength in France should be maintained and increased. "Yet," said the French official war communiqué issued on June 16, "our troops continue to fight with the same bravery, offering fierce resistance to the invader in spite of the latter's superiority in material and effectives."

150 Divisions Engaged

With amazing swiftness the Germans continued their drive into Central France, threatening, on the one hand, the French defences on the Loire and, on the other, the divisions now practically surrounded in Alsace-Lorraine and in that tomb of an outmoded strategy, the Maginot Line. Already, on June 16, the Germans were claiming that the Line, so recently deemed impregnable, had been pierced on the Saar, and that the whole front from the Channel to Switzerland was in "victorious movement." It was stated that the French were in full retreat, and were being pursued by "mechanized and non-mechanized forces which are vying with each other in forced marches, and are often overtaking the fleeing and exhausted enemy." The Nazi communiqués spoke of waves of aeroplanes attacking with great success the French detachments retreating to the Loire by road and rail; south-east of Paris and on the Upper Marne strong tank and motorized divisions were advancing unceasingly southwards; the Plateau of Langres, north of Dijon, had been crossed, so that the line of retreat of the French forces retiring from the Rhine and the Saar had been cut.

Meanwhile, in the northern sector of the front, north-west and west of Paris, British armoured units and infantry were fighting desperate rear-guard actions side by side with their French allies. Western Normandy, Maine and Poitou were described as resembling a giant anthill brutally disturbed by the hordes of German tanks, by the hundreds of thousands of German infantry who moved westwards with a force that nothing could stop. Berlin waxed jubilant over 200,000 prisoners. And everywhere the movements of the retreating Allies were hampered, and often paralysed, by the great flood of refugees who streamed along the roads and across the fields, impelled by the one overmastering desire to escape from the approaching Nazis.

That Sunday, June 16, marked a decisive turn in the war. The position of the French armies was considered to be so desperate that the British Government transmitted to their French colleagues, now established in Bordeaux, draft proposals for an Act of Union between Great Britain and France. The proposal, so dramatic in its making, so vast in its implications, was considered by M. Reynaud's Cabinet, but it was finally rejected. A majority of the Cabinet had come to the conclusion that further fighting was futile. General Weygand could hold out no hopes of stopping the German advance, and the appeals to President Roosevelt had not been answered in the way that perhaps





ANGLO-FRENCH RED CROSS UNIT IN WAR ZONE

Sharing the dangers of the French Army, of which it was officially recognized a unit, the Anglo-French Ambulance Corps experienced the full hazards of war during the retreat to Bordeaux. It was in Compiègne during the bombing, results of which are seen in the upper photograph. Immediately above, one of the Corps' ambulances is seen ditched by the side of a French road.

Photos, Miss D. M. Clarke, a member of the Corps







FIRST GERMAN SOLDIERS IN PARIS

Above, Dietrich (left), Nazi press chief, and Boehmer, head of the foreign press dept., are saluting the memorial to France's Unknown Warrior. Top, right, German soldiers in one of the tree-lined avenues which radiate from the Place de l'Etoile. Centre, right, viewing Paris from the Eiffel Tower. Below, German cyclists pass by the Central Markets.

Photos, Keystone; Associated Press; E.N.A.; Wide World



was hoped. So Reynaud resigned, and in his place President Lebrun appointed Marshal Pétain, who at once decided to make overtures to the enemy for an armistice.

But while the approach to Hitler was being made through the Spanish Ambassador, Señor Lequerica, the war went on. The French communiqué issued just before midnight on June 17 stated that the battle had continued throughout the day on the whole front, and particularly along the Middle Loire. In several places enemy detachments had succeeded in crossing the river, while fighting was going on round Orléans, and Dijon had fallen. Continuous front there was none; in Central France the position was fluid in the extreme, but the guns of the Maginot Line were still in action, though the Germans were claiming that the ring around the French forces in Alsace-Lorraine had been completely closed and their motorized troops had reached the Swiss frontier at Pontarlier. In the Alps the Italians, who reported on June 15 that they were about to attack Nice and Savoy, were little in evidence.

There Was No Front Line

Broadcasting on the evening of June 17, Mr. Churchill admitted that "the news from France is very bad," and in the hours and days that followed there was nothing to lighten the gloom. By now the French army had been broken into pieces, large and small. The Germans claimed that their enemies were evidently at the point of dissolution. Though it was known that negotiations for an armistice were in progress there was no slackening of the German drive, which had now become a pursuit. The German air force harried the retreating French columns; many of the bridges across the Loire were heavily bombed, and the troops which were crowded about them waiting to cross were bombed and machine-gunned. The Nazis admitted that in Lorraine the French were offering a stubborn resistance, but in spite of this the German attack in the direction of the Vosges was continuing its progress.





FRANCE IN SORRY PLIGHT

Top right, a photograph radio'd from Paris to New York showing French prisoners entering the Palace of Versailles after it had been taken over by the Nazis. Below, German motorcyclists are advancing through a shattered street in Orléans, once a beautiful French town, wrecked by the German bombardment.

Photos, Keystone; Associated Press

While the reply was being awaited from Germany to Marshal Pétain's application, a communiqué was broadcast on behalf of the French Government in Bordeaux explaining the military situation which made it necessary to sue for an armistice. The French navy, it was stated, was still intact, and the French air force remained powerful because the losses it had suffered had been made good through the efforts of the aeroplane factories. It was the position of the French land armies that had become untenable. These armies were now (June 18) divided into four distinct groups, separated one from another and all standing in danger of becoming surrounded or crushed. The western group, containing all that was left of the B.E.F., was fighting vigorously, and had made several counter-attacks. The central group was in the most serious situation, following the tremendous



from any and every port in north-west France, and across the Channel in England great preparations were on foot to resist the invader who, it was now realized, might make his attempt at any moment.

Still the negotiations for an armistice dragged out their weary length, and still the French armies continued to fight and bleed. From an official spokesman in Bordeaux came a statement of the position of affairs on the several zones of fighting. In the west, it was stated, the French forces under the command of General de la Laurencie and General Langlois were withdrawing partly into Brittany and partly south of the Lower Loire, fighting rearguard actions as they went. The armies which were fighting round Paris under the orders of General Hering, General Frère, and General Touchon, gave battle again on the Middle Loire, and then, in accordance with orders, renewed their retreat to the south, in the hope of being able to establish themselves there in more favourable positions. In Champagne the armies, outflanked as they were on either side by the German armoured divisions, endeavoured to break through in the direction of Dijon.

In Lorraine the armies under the command of General Condé and General Bourret had formed their battalions into squares, and in face of attacks delivered without cease from east, north, and west, they were progressing steadily, step by step, from the west of the Vosges towards the south, in an effort to break through the encircling enemy. The army of Alsace, commanded by General Laure, was also carving a way through the enemy

A Bitter and Hard-fought Retreat



German drive to the west of Troyes and Dijon; between it and the troops of the Maginot Line, constituting the third group, was an immense gap originating from the loss of Château-Thierry. The divisions in the Maginot Line had been partly evacuated and were now being regrouped on another front. The fourth group was the Alpine army, and this was still intact, although its flank had been exposed by the German thrust through the Saône gap.

The Germans, for their part, continued to claim an amazing succession of victories. Not only had the Maginot Line south of Saarbruecken been penetrated, but the still defended sectors of the great system of fortifications were being attacked in the rear. "The fortress of Dijon fell without a struggle," they declared; "the fortress of Metz was surrendered to an advancing mobile detachment . . . Over 100,000 prisoners were brought in. The booty comprises the whole equipment of numerous French divisions and several fortresses." And in the north, too, the front was collapsing as the Germans penetrated ever more deeply into Normandy and Brittany; the fall of Cherbourg was announced on June 18, and among the other cities now in German hands were Dijon, Metz and Colmar. The remnants of the B.E.F. were being evacuated

RENDERED USELESS TO THE FOE

The French destroyed a vast amount of war material to prevent it falling into German hands. Lower photo shows a French gun rendered useless to the enemy save for scrap. Top, left, debris of French army cars and lorries deliberately fired before the German occupation.

Photos, Associated Press; Keystone



GAUL'S ANCIENT CAPITAL IN GERMAN HANDS

The ancient city of Lyons, famous as a centre of the silk industry and a large manufacturing town, was captured by the Germans on June 20, 1940. Nazis are seen here watering their horses at a fountain in a Lyons square.

Photo, E.N.A.

forces which strove to bar its path. Thus, it was asserted, although the armies were cut off from each other, each retained its cohesion and was conducting its retreat in accordance with orders. Fighting thus, day after day, without respite, against enemy forces superior to them in numbers and material, they had sustained great losses through enemy fire and through sheer fatigue, but their morale remained splendid, and they were putting up a most desperate resistance.

That resistance was acknowledged by the enemy, who, after claiming that, following the storming of a passage across the Maginot Line in several places, Mulhouse and Belfort, Nancy and Strasbourg had been taken, admitted that the enemy resistance in the Maginot Line on both sides of Thionville was still unshaken.

During the next day, June 20, there was no great change in the situation. The Germans continued their advance from Nantes in the west to near Lyons in the east; they had also penetrated the Jura as far as the Swiss frontier. Across that frontier tens of thousands of French soldiers, together with a Polish division and a great host of civilians, were pouring. In and about the Maginot Line violent fighting was in progress, but the army in the Alps was still awaiting the great Italian offensive.

On June 20 the news of the fall of Lyons was given out by the French wireless, and the Germans claimed to have captured Brest, France's great naval base in Brittany. From Nantes to Tours, the Lower Loire had been crossed at several points; in Southern Lorraine the remnants of the French Eastern Army were confined still closer in the Moselle area between Epinal and Toul, both of which were now in German hands, and in the Vosges. Thionville still held out, but in Burgundy the Nazis, advancing from Belfort and the Upper Rhine, had joined hands.

The Armistice was signed at 6.50 p.m. on June 22, but it was decreed that hostilities should not cease until six hours after the Italian Government had notified the German Government that a Franco-Italian armistice had also been concluded.

Mussolini's Little War

But before that could be, Mussolini must have his little war, his great victory. While the plenipotentiaries were discussing the terms of armistice in the forest glade at Compiègne, he gave the order to his troops to attack. An Italian communiqué issued on June 24 stated that: "On the Alpine front from Mont Blanc to the sea our troops started a general attack on June 21. The formidable enemy defences built into the rock on the high mountains, the strong reactions on the part of the enemy, who was firmly decided to oppose our advance, and the bad atmospheric conditions did not check the advance of our troops, who scored notable successes everywhere. An Italian contingent managed to gain possession of certain fortifications, such as the fort of Chanaillet, near Briançon, and the fort of Razet, in the lower Roya valley. Entire Italian units reached the valley of the Isère, Arc, Guil, Ubaye, Tinée, and Vésubie, penetrating the enemy's fortified lines and threatening the whole enemy front. The advance of our troops proceeds along the entire front."

Such was the Italian version. The French was given in a communiqué issued on the evening of Sunday, June 23. "On the Alpine front," it read, "there has been a continuation of Italian attempts to progress. On the whole, we still hold our advance positions." A few hours later the French were still claiming that they had repulsed the Italians in front of their positions of resistance, and that nowhere had that line been broken.

The last French communiqué of the war, issued by G.H.Q. at Bordeaux on the night of June 24, sounded no note of disaster nor of collapse. "Slight progress was made by the Germans in the Charente region," it read, "where the enemy occupied Angoulême, and also in the Rhône valley, where he reached Aix-les-Bains and the banks of the Vorette. In the Alps, Italian attacks continued all day.

THEY LED FRENCH ARMIES IN THE BATTLE OF FRANCE

In this page are photographs of some of the French generals who took part in the Battle of France, which, after fierce fighting, ended in the capitulation of the French Army.

Photos, Wide World; G.P.U.; Keystone; Associated Press



General Frère, who commanded the French 7th Army



General Héring, Governor of Paris until June 13, when he assumed an army command.



General Touchon, who led the French 6th Army



General de la Laurencie, commander of the 3rd Army Corps, with H.Q. at Rouen.



General Condé, who led one of the French armies in Lorraine.



General Langlois, once Military Governor of Metz, commanded an army in Brittany.

They were checked near the frontier by our advance posts except in the Maurienne district, where the enemy advanced a little farther than Lanslebourg [two or three miles within the French frontier], and in the coastal sector, where he occupied Mentone. Our positions of resistance are intact on the whole Alpine front."

The Franco-Italian Armistice was signed at 7.35 p.m., Italian summer time (6.35 p.m., British summer time), on the evening of June 24, and at 1.35 (12.35 a.m., B.S.T.) the next morning it came into force, simultaneously with the one already concluded between France and Germany. The French front had practically disintegrated: the Germans had captured La Rochelle and St. Nazaire and had occupied the Atlantic coast down to the Gironde estuary; south of Lyons they had got to Grenoble and Chambery; they claimed to have occupied the area north of Poitiers. Many of the important Maginot fortresses had been taken and the capture of others would have been a matter of days. (See relief map in pages 970-971.)

The war had begun, in effect, on May 10, only 46 days before. Yet these 46 days had sufficed to bring to the ground the military power of France; and with her, involved in a catastrophe without parallel in modern times, were Belgium and Holland, not to mention Luxemburg.

Not the least amazing feature of the débâcle was the fact that the French casualties were on an almost insignificant scale, compared with those of 1914–18.

In the absence of official figures, we have the statement of General de Gaulle, who was Under-Secretary for War in M. Reynaud's Cabinet, that 60,000 French soldiers had been killed and perhaps 300,000 wounded; 350,000 prisoners were taken by the Nazis in Belgium and France in the first phase of the battle, and 600,000 later. The figures of prisoners taken would seem to have been an underestimate, for the Germans claimed that the total number of French prisoners amounted to 1,900,000 men, including five army commanders and about 29,000 officers, and this figure was not disputed by the Vichy Government. (The Nazis also claimed that amongst the war material seized was "the entire equipment of 55 French divisions, not counting the armament and the equipment of the Maginot Line and other fortifications.")

The German casualties from May 10 to the Armistice—"so far as they can be ascertained"—were given in a report by the German High Command. According to this, the losses, which may be accepted with some reserve, were: killed, 27,074; missing, 18,384; wounded, 111,034—a total of 156,492.

Of the Allies, who so short a time before had made a bold front in the West against the Nazis, only one was left. To quote the German report again: "After this greatest victory in German history over an opponent who was regarded as the most powerful land power in the world, who fought both skilfully and bravely, there are no longer Allies. Only one foe remains: England."





FRENCH PRISONERS OF WAR

Lower photo, a group of French soldiers, taken prisoner by the Nazis during the Battle of France, are marching away to captivity while a German 'plane flies overhead. In the upper photograph French soldiers are being searched by their German captors before being sent to a prisoners' camp.

Photos, Associated Press; E.N.A.

Before dawn on June 25 the "Cease Fire" had sounded and had been obeyed—but not everywhere. Still, for nearly a week more, little bands of gallant Frenchmen, cut off from the outside world in isolated sections of the Maginot Line, continued their desperate resistance against the Nazi hordes who assailed them from every side. At last General Huntziger, chief French delegate to the Armistice Commission meeting at Wiesbaden, was instructed on June 30 to make contact with the heroic defenders of these forts on which the French flag was still flying, and inform them that the Armistice had been signed a week before. Then, when the last of these forts had surrendered, the sound of firing ceased. The war on the Western Front had ended.





ITALY INVADES HELPLESS FRANCE

Entering the war when France had collapsed, Italy had very little fighting to do in that theatre of war. Our photographs show: above, damage from French artillery fire in the Italian frontier town of Ventimiglia; right, Italian infantry marching towards Mentone; below, the Italian flag flying over the captured French Alpine fort of Trevessette.

Photos, Keystone; E.N.A.



Historic Documents. CXXXVII–CXLVI

SUPREME EFFORTS FAIL TO AVERT DISASTER:

Despite Britain's assurances of every possible support, and her final dramatic proposal for a Franco-British Union; despite President Roosevelt's promise of ever-increasing material help, France could hold out no longer, and on June 17, 1940, Marshal Pétain, at the head of a newly-formed Government, appealed to Hitler to discuss "as between soldiers, and in honour, the means to end hostilities."

M. REYNAUD, PRIME MINISTER OF FRANCE, IN AN APPEAL TO PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, JUNE 10, 1940:

DURING six days and six nights our divisions have been fighting without an hour of respite against an enemy disposing of a crushing superiority in men and material. The enemy has today nearly reached the gates of Paris. We shall fight in front of Paris, we shall fight behind Paris. We will shut ourselves into one of our provinces, and if we are driven out we will go to North Africa and, if necessary, into our possessions in America.

Part of the Government has already left Paris. I am myself preparing to go to the Army. This is to intensify the struggle with all the forces remaining and not to give up. May I ask you to explain all that to your people and to all citizens of the United States, telling them that we are resolved to sacrifice ourselves in the struggle we are carrying on for all free men?

At the hour in which I am addressing you another dictatorship has just struck France in the back. A naval war will start. You have generously answered the appeal I made to you several days ago across the Atlantic. Today, June 10, 1940, my duty is to ask you for even greater assistance. At the same time that you explain the situation to the men and women of America I beg you publicly to declare that the United States will accord the Allies their material support through all means, except the sending of an expeditionary corps. I beg you to do this before it is too late. I know the gravity of such a gesture. Its gravity itself necessitates that it should not come too late.

You told us yourself on Oct. 5, 1937: "I am compelled, as you are compelled, to look ahead. The peace, freedom and security of 90 per cent of the population of the world are being jeopardized by the remaining 10 per cent, who are threatening to break down all international order and law. In accordance with moral standards that have received almost universal acceptance through the centuries, they can and must find some way to make their will prevail."

The hour has now come for 90 per cent of the citizens of the world to unite against the mortal danger which is threatening us all. I have confidence in the solidarity of the American people in this vital struggle which the Allies are waging, not only for their own safety, but also for the safety of American democracy.

MR. CHURCHILL, PRIME MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN, IN A MESSAGE TO M. REYNAUD, JUNE 10:

THE maximum possible support is being given by British forces in the great battle which the French Armies are now conducting with such undaunted courage. All available means are being used to give help on land, sea and in the air. The R.A.F. has been continually engaged over the battle-fields; and within the last few days fresh British forces have landed in France to take their place with those already engaged in the common struggle, while further extensive reinforcements are being rapidly organized and will shortly be available.

M. REYNAUD, IN A BROADCAST APPEAL TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, JUNE 13:

AMID the misfortune which has befallen our country one thing above all must be said: at a moment when fate lies heavy upon us we must cry aloud to the world the heroism of our Army, of our soldiers and their leaders. I have seen men returning from the battle who had not slept for five days. These men had no doubts about the issue of the battle. They had no doubts about the fate of their country. The heroism of the armies of Dunkirk has been exceeded in the battles which are taking place from the sea to the Argonne.

Our race does not allow itself to be beaten by invasion. It has seen so many of them in the course of the centuries. But it has always repulsed and dominated the invader. All that—the sufferings and the courage of France—the world must know. All free men must pay their debt to her. The hour has come. The French Army is the advance guard of the armies of democracy and has sacrificed itself. In losing this battle it has inflicted terrible blows on the common enemy. The aeroplanes lost, the tanks destroyed, the losses suffered, explain Germany's damaged morale, notwithstanding this victory. Wounded France has the right to turn now to the democracies and to say: "I have claims on you."

But it is one thing to approve and another to act. We know what place the ideal holds among the American people. I address a new and final appeal to the President of the United States. Each time that I have asked him to increase his help he has done so generously. But it is a question today of the future of France, of the very life of France. Our fight has been a painful one. In the common struggle the superiority of the British Air Force is asserting itself day by day. But clouds of aeroplanes must assist us. Forces must come from the other side of the Atlantic and crush the evil forces which dominate Europe. We have the right to hope that the day is approaching when we shall receive that help. We keep hope in our hearts.

We want France to keep a free Government. That is why we have left Paris. We could not allow Hitler to be able to say that there was in France only a puppet Government such as those which he had tried to set up almost everywhere.

Our people in the course of its history has perhaps faltered, but it has never abdicated. The French nation will know great sufferings. May it be worthy of the nation's past. May it be brotherly and close its ranks around the wounded Patrie. The day of resurrection will come.

BRITISH GOVERNMENT, IN A MESSAGE TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, JUNE 13:

IN this solemn hour for the British and French nations and for the cause of freedom and democracy, to which they have avowed themselves, His Majesty's Government desire to pay to the Government of the French Republic the tribute which is due to the heroic fortitude and constancy of the French Armies in the battle against enormous odds.

Their effort is worthy of the most glorious traditions and has inflicted deep and long-lasting injury upon the enemy's strength. Great Britain will continue to give the utmost aid in her power. We take this opportunity of proclaiming the indissoluble union of our two peoples and our two empires. We cannot measure the various forms of tribulation which will fall upon our peoples in the near future. We are sure that the ordeal by fire will only fuse them together into one unconquerable whole.

We renew to the French Republic our pledge and resolve to continue the struggle at all costs in France, in this island, upon the oceans, and in the air, wherever it may lead us, using all our resources to the utmost limit and sharing together the burden of repairing the ravages of war.

We shall never turn from the conflict until France stands safe and erect in all her grandeur, until the wronged and enslaved States and peoples have been liberated, and until civilization is free from the nightmare of Nazism. That this day will dawn we are more sure than ever. It may dawn sooner than we now have the right to expect.

PÉTAIN TAKES POWER AND ASKS FOR PEACE

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, IN A MESSAGE TO M. REYNAUD, JUNE 15:

I AM sending you this reply to your message which I am sure you will realise has received the most earnest as well as the most friendly study on our part. First of all, let me reiterate the ever-increasing admiration with which the American people and their Government are viewing the resplendent courage with which the French armies are resisting the invaders on French soil.

I wish also to reiterate in the most emphatic terms that, making every possible effort under present conditions, the Government of the United States has made it possible for the Allied Armies to obtain during the weeks that have just passed aeroplanes, artillery, and munitions of many kinds, and that this Government, so long as the Allied Governments continue to resist, will redouble its efforts in this direction. I believe that it is possible to say that every week that goes by will see additional material on its way to the Allied nations.

In accordance with its policy not to recognize the results of conquest of territory acquired through military aggression, the Government of the United States will not consider as valid any attempts to infringe by force the independence and territorial integrity of France.

In these hours which are so heartrending for the French people and yourself I send you assurances of my utmost sympathy, and can further assure you that so long as the French people continue in the defence of their liberty, which constitutes the cause of popular institutions throughout the world, so long will they rest assured that material supplies will be sent to them from the United States in ever-increasing quantities and kinds. I know that you will understand that these statements carry with them no implication of military commitments. Only Congress can make such commitments.

DRAFT DECLARATION OF UNION COMMUNICATED TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT BY H.M. AMBASSADOR, SIR RONALD CAMPBELL, JUNE 16:

AT this most fateful moment in the history of the modern world the Government of the United Kingdom and the French Republic make this declaration of indissoluble union and unyielding resolution in their common defence of justice and freedom against subjection to a system which reduces mankind to a life of robots and slaves.

The two Governments declare that France and Great Britain shall no longer be two nations, but one Franco-British Union. The constitution of the Union will provide for joint organs of defence, foreign, financial and economic policies. Every citizen of France will enjoy immediately citizenship of Great Britain, every British subject will become a citizen of France. Both countries will share responsibility for the repair of the devastation of war, wherever it occurs in their territories, and the resources of both shall be equally, and as one, applied to that purpose.

During the war there shall be a single war Cabinet, and all the forces of Britain and France, whether on land, sea, or in the air, will be placed under its direction. It will govern from wherever it best can. The two Parliaments will be formally associated.

The nations of the British Empire are already forming new armies. France will keep her available forces in the field, on the sea and in the air.

The Union appeals to the United States to fortify the economic resources of the Allies and to bring her powerful material aid to the common cause.

The Union will concentrate its whole energy against the power of the enemy no matter where the battle may be. And thus we shall conquer.

OFFICIAL FRENCH COMMUNIQUÉ ANNOUNCING CONSTITUTION OF NEW GOVERNMENT, JUNE 17:

IN the present circumstances the Council of Ministers, on the proposal of M. Reynaud, has deemed that the Government of France should be entrusted to a high personality enjoying the unanimous respect of the nation. In consequence M. Reynaud offered to the President of the Republic the resignation of the Cabinet. M. Albert Lebrun accepted the resignation, paying homage to the patriotism which dictated it, and appealed immediately to Marshal Pétain, who accepted the task of forming a new Cabinet. The President of the Republic has thanked Marshal Pétain, who, assuming the heaviest responsibility ever borne by a French statesman, has proved once again his total devotion to the Fatherland.

MARSHAL PÉTAIN, NEW FRENCH PREMIER, IN A BROADCAST TO THE NATION, JUNE 17:

FRENCHMEN: At the request of President Lebrun, I assumed, as from today, the direction of the French Government, certain of the affection of our admirable Army, which is fighting with a heroism worthy of its wonderful military tradition against an enemy superior in number and armaments. Certain that by its wonderful resistance it has fulfilled its duty towards its Allies, certain of the support of the war veterans whom I had the honour to command, certain of the confidence of the whole people, I give myself to France to help her in her hour of misfortune. . . .

It is with a heavy heart that I say we must cease to fight. I appealed last night to the adversary in order to ask him whether he is ready to discuss with me, as between soldiers and in honour, the means to end hostilities.

Let all Frenchmen rally round the Government over which I preside during these difficult trials and affirm their whole faith in the destiny of their country.

M. BAUDOUIN, NEW FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER, IN A BROADCAST FROM BORDEAUX, JUNE 17:

AT this hour in which the very existence of France is threatened, her Government, grouped round the glorious leader of its tradition and its soul, have shown the discipline and abnegation of the French people. More than at any moment of national history this common tie of suffering and of resolution ensures the maintenance of French nobility and pride. Whatever decisions may be taken by the Government they will be honourable decisions. There is not a Frenchman but is determined that in this extreme adversity France shall preserve her dignity, courage and faith in the future. It is because they are sure of the country's spirit of independence that the Government remain among you and have asked on what conditions the carnage of our sons might be stopped . . . .

We have, it is true, received marks of sympathy. We have had the assistance of Great Britain, whose fleet, united to ours, has never lost the mastery of the seas, and whose troops and magnificent Air Force have shared our battles. We have also had the help of Poland, Holland and Belgium. But modern war cannot be improvised, and our friends have not been able to bring us the support necessary to the advance-guard which the French Army represented.

That is why the Pétain Government have had to ask for conditions of peace. But they have not abandoned their arms. The country is ready to seek, in honour, the way to put an end to hostilities. But it will never be ready to accept shameful conditions which would mean the end of spiritual freedom for her people. If the French are obliged to choose between existence and honour their choice is made, and by their total sacrifice it is the soul of France and all it represents for the world that they will have saved.

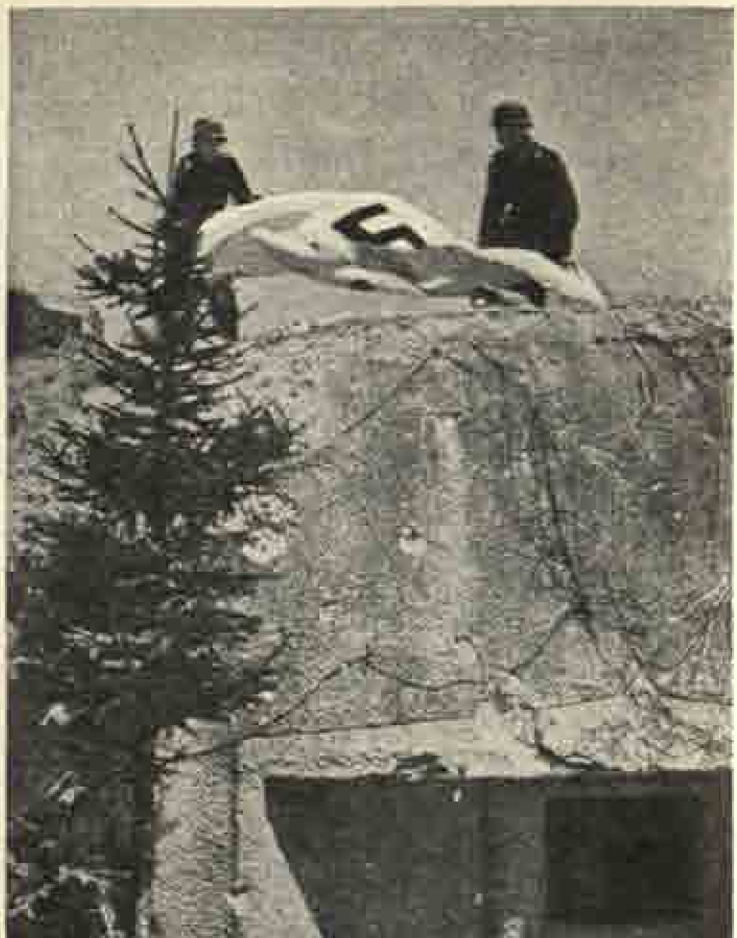
MR. CHURCHILL, IN A BROADCAST MESSAGE, JUNE 17:

THE news from France is very bad, and I grieve for the gallant French people, who have fallen into this terrible misfortune. Nothing will alter our feelings towards them, or our faith that the genius of France will rise again. What has happened in France makes no difference to British faith and purpose.

We have become the sole champions now in arms to defend the world cause. We shall do our best to be worthy of that high honour. We shall defend our island, and, with the British Empire around us, we shall fight on unconquerable until the curse of Hitler is lifted from the brows of men. We are sure that in the end all will be well.







END OF THE MAGINOT LINE

These photographs, from German sources, show: 1, French fortress troops surrendering; 2, Anti-tank pill box, showing damage done by armour-piercing shells; 3, Nazis laying out the swastika over one of the forts as a guide to aircraft; 4, Hitler inspecting the Maginot Line (left to right, General Dollmann, the Fuehrer, General Keitel); 5, German soldiers cutting grass by one of the Maginot Line forts.

Photos, K.N.A.; Wide World





THE COLLAPSE OF FRANCE: SOME CONTRIBUTORY CAUSES OF THE TRAGEDY

The Great Tradition of France—Overrated Military Experts, Clinging to Outworn Theories—Unpreparedness of the Fighting Services—Responsibility of Pétain, Gamelin and Weygand—Unsavoury Features of Political Life—Ideologies in Conflict—Sinister Traffic With the Axis—The Men of Vichy

Why did France collapse?

None of the many explanations that have been advanced up to now by a host of French and foreign commentators can be accepted as wholly convincing or entirely satisfactory. The plain fact is that in face of a tragedy of such magnitude, and a problem of such complexity—involving not merely the defeat within a few brief weeks of a first-class military power, but the total collapse of a state which for over a thousand years had been the greatest glory of civilization—it is quite impossible to find a simple answer or to reduce it to a succinct formula. The French themselves, who are past masters at coining brilliant formulas, have failed so far to explain adequately the reasons for their country's undoing.

Let us look at the facts. Here was a country where one half of the population lived on the land (practically all of which it owned, and in small holdings, too) and was attached to the soil with almost animal passion; a country that had known the scourge of German invasion with tragic regularity in the whole course of its history, and three times within living memory; a country whose standard of intelligence and education was high enough to have enabled its people to realize that "il faut en finir," when more ignorant and indolent races were still hoping that one could avoid the issue by merely blinking it; a country, in short, where no illusion could have existed about the consequences of surrender.

Then, too, France was a country of great military tradition; with compulsory military service since days immemorial; with famous war colleges and other military and naval training centres; with a General Staff enjoying a unique reputation in the world. Had the disaster of May-June, 1940, been limited to a military defeat of first magnitude, even that would have been hard to comprehend. But that the French should have completely abandoned all attempts at prolonging the struggle against their hated Teutonic invaders—if necessary, in every village or city, in the colonies and dominions; that they should, moreover, have accepted not only a shameful surrender but a series of lamentable and treasonable actions, committed in their name by a self-appointed and thoroughly unrepresentive Government, is something that defies understanding. It is this that causes all those who love and know France, and who tried desperately to understand her problems, complete bewilderment and the utmost pain.

France's Heritage



THE 'TIGER'S' DISCIPLE

Secretary to Clemenceau during and after the war of 1914-18, M. Georges Mandel (above) at the time of France's collapse was Minister of Colonies. He was in favour of continuing the struggle against the Nazis.

Photo, Topical

While there is no single answer to the grim question, there is a series of considerations which, taken together, provide at least a part of that answer. First, there is the matter of military organization and leadership. The professional soldiers of France have always been profoundly critical of, and often opposed to, her Republican regime. They served the Third Republic while not really accepting it. At times they deliberately sabotaged it, and never more so than with the outbreak of this war. A certain number of the senior officers did not wish the Republic (for which they felt supreme contempt) to emerge successfully from this, its second struggle against Germany during their lifetime. However misguided, there was a considerable number of generals and others who genuinely believed in "regeneration by suffering."

The much vaunted genius of the French General Staff, the scope and daring of its strategic and tactical conceptions, appear to have been grossly overrated. This flattering estimate was based entirely on memories of a glorious past and not on any present-day realities. Even in the war of 1914-18 the Allied leaders—the French, quite as much as the British—showed (with rare exceptions) incapacity for grasping the changed and progressively changing conditions of modern warfare. As regards the present struggle many of their conceptions were wrong from the start, and the offensive power of mechanized forces acting in cooperation with aircraft was under-estimated. In countries which had no aggressive designs public opinion deprecated as militarism the development of an offensive spirit or strategy, and defensive doctrines were preached, though seldom by professional soldiers. Such doctrines had their effect on political direction, and indirectly on military chiefs. The result certainly was confusion in strategical views and preparations, and many unfortunate compromises.

Overrated Military Leaders

The Maginot Line has been said to represent the height of folly; but there was nothing wrong with the Line except that there was not enough of it, and that, having built it, the French military authorities proceeded to neglect everything else. Not the Maginot Line, which was turned, not effectively pierced, but "Maginitis" was to blame—the belief that the waging of this war required little effort and that it would somehow win itself. The Line served its purpose of allowing France to mobilize unmolested during the early months of the war, and it is open to speculation whether the Germans could ever have got through if, instead of stopping short where it did, it had extended along the whole Belgian frontier.

It is now admitted that the French, who alone among the leading nations





MAGINOT LINE ENCIRCLED

These Nazi propaganda photographs, staged after the event, purport to show how the forts of the Maginot Line were destroyed. In places the Maginot defences held out for a considerable time, but, outflanked and then taken in reverse, the defenders had no alternative but to surrender. Here forts are being attacked with flame-throwers and grenades. *Photos, E.N.A.*



of Europe had not disarmed after 1920, entered this war in a state of utmost unpreparedness, though no hint of that state was permitted to reach the outside world. In 1870 the French Minister of War was reputed to have declared that his army was "ready to the last gaiter button," and then it turned out that it lacked a great deal. Something of a similar nature seems to have happened now. Where was all that mechanized equipment which, General Weygand told a British audience shortly before the war, had made such enormous progress between 1929 and 1939! Few tanks, few anti-aircraft guns, few lorries, an inadequate first-line air-force, and, according to some, not even enough uniforms. Where did all the money go—those milliards voted to national defence year after year by all French Governments, irrespective of their political colouring? For it is important to realize that, whatever the crimes or shortcomings of the French politicians, neither the Right nor the Left ever dared to interfere with the military authorities, who—but for a few insignificant cuts a couple of years before the war—invariably got all the financial appropriations they wanted.

Moreover, during the twenty years that separated the present war from the last one there was complete continuity in the supreme command and technical supervision of the French Armed Forces. Marshal Pétain himself throughout that period was the "first military personage of France," with Weygand, then Gamelin, and finally once more Weygand, in active charge. These men, therefore, must accept the fullest share of responsibility for the defeat of their country and cannot get out of it by blaming it on the politicians.

Responsibility of Three Men

In bringing about the collapse of France the politicians were as culpable as the military leaders, whose gross incapacity or deliberate sabotage hamstringed the army. In recent years the political personnel of the Third Republic was singularly ill chosen. It is wrong to attribute the misfortunes of France to "gerontocracy" [government by old men], for the post-war Governments, which succeeded each other so rapidly (under M. Lebrun's presidency alone there had been twenty cabinets in less than ten years), consisted mostly of men in the prime of life. And in the past it had fallen to one or two old men to serve their country well. Clemenceau, for example, won the war for the French when he was rising eighty; and Louis Barthou, their last great Foreign Minister, was well over seventy. But

of late the political lawyers, among whom the majority of French cabinet ministers had invariably been recruited, seemed to have preferred their own vested interests or the interests of their clients—both French and foreign—to the interests of the state they were supposed to be serving.

The unsavoury characteristics of French political life are by now well known: Fifth Columnism at the top, treason and corruption, incompetence, disunity, unworthy pettiness, sexual laxity, venality, obstructionism and administrative anarchy. Yet it is essential to realize that all these lamentable features were largely restricted to the big cities and did not touch the country as a whole. It is in the big cities that all the scourges of the "République des Camarades" flourished. It is there that the incessant struggle for power, honours and money went on unhampered by any consideration of patriotism or even ordinary human decency.

Corrupt French Political Life

This is not to say that among the townspeople of France there were no honest, hardworking and profoundly loyal citizens. Of course, there were masses of them. But side by side with them there existed a whole series of separate and frequently intersecting worlds, and even underworlds, of their own which can only be described as the most unhealthy and abject manifestations of modern society. Politicians in and out of Parliament, municipal councillors, the civil service, the police, "big business," the press, the judiciary and even the Church took an active part in fostering and creating the process of decomposition which at last proved the ruin of France. In this poisoned and sinister political atmosphere of Paris and the big cities there was plenty of scope for every conceivable form of blackmail, vice and corruption and also for trafficking in treason on a hitherto unknown scale. With consummate adroitness the enemies of France availed themselves of every opportunity for originating or exploiting any sources of disintegration.

There was, further, a genuine and profound ideological conflict. For fifteen years the parties of the Left had been preaching pacifism in France and were trying to persuade the nation that the limits of accommodation with Germany must be sought for. During the last five years the parties of the Right preached defeatism with equal vehemence, and some of their leaders openly admitted that they preferred Hitler to the French Jew, Léon Blum.





FRANCE WAS LULLED IN FALSE SECURITY

Photos, French Official

Outstanding among the complex causes of France's collapse was the long period of inactivity behind strong defensive positions to which the Army was condemned prior to May, 1940. Top: one of the heavy guns which exchanged desultory shots with German batteries across the Rhine. Centre and bottom: infantry in the opening stages of the Battle of France.



Sinister political personages travelled between Paris, Rome and Berlin. There was Laval, who claimed to be on the best of terms with Mussolini. There was Flandin, who sent Hitler a telegram of congratulation. There was de Brinon, now appointed by the Vichy Government their "Ambassador" in Paris—a friend of Goering—who was continuously visiting Germany and then plotting against his more patriotic colleagues in the French Chamber of Deputies. Bonnet, the Foreign Minister, seemed ever ready for any act of moral turpitude as long as he could make money out of it, or gratify his political ambitions. Daladier, for nearly five years Minister of National Defence and most of that time also Prime Minister, seemed to make up for energy, clear thinking and courage by obstinacy, ambition and ill temper. Not a strong man, he tried to assume the pose of a dictator and failed to impress anybody. There were other influential politicians of all persuasions who were helping to paralyse or sell out the French nation during the years and months and weeks and days of decision; their name was legion.

Sinister Figures

Among these conscious and unconscious traitors, libertines, crooks and weaklings—on whom no judgement can be too severe—only a very few courageous, able, patriotic and efficient men stood out. First and foremost there was Georges Mandel—Clemenceau's worthy disciple. If there were any doubt about his unique position the Vichy gang has offered the world a most convincing proof of it by making him their "scapegoat number one." They could not forgive him for being all the things that they could never be. There were one or two other good men besides Mandel, but they did not command all his qualities. Dautry, the brilliant organizer; Reynaud, far-seeing, energetic, the best Finance Minister France had had for generations—a brilliant man whose undoing was the clique of perverts and eccentrics with which he allowed himself to be surrounded. In the Press there was "Pertinax," the famous diplomatic correspondent, who for years tried in vain to warn the nation. There were many patriotic and efficient civil servants, but on the whole only a small group, which was never given the chance of asserting itself.



SOCIALIST LEADER

M. Léon Blum, above, became the first Socialist Prime Minister in France in 1936, and introduced a number of social reforms which made him bitterly hated by the vested interests in France.

Photo, E.N.A.

As for the intellectual élite. In its individualism, carried to the extreme; in its mental snobbishness, which would not allow it to support plain bourgeois democracy, it turned either to the extreme Right or to the extreme Left. One half of these exceptionally able men were pro-Communist; the other half reactionaries. It was pitiful, and to the friends of France profoundly humiliating, to see writers of real talent whip out hackneyed political saws with the air of utmost self-satisfaction, or with an ostensibly purblind belief in the infallibility of their fads and nostrums.

So much for the cities. But the heart of France had always been in the villages, not in the cities. And in the villages millions of French men and women went on working extremely hard, remaining sound and loyal citizens—as they had always been. The men (from 18 to 50, be it noted) responded to the mobilization orders without a hitch. They would have fought and they would have died for France without a murmur, as their fathers and ancestors had done. They were never given a chance to do even that. For eight months they were

FRANCE'S POLITICAL INTRIGUERS

Left, M. Pierre Laval, the Auvergnat lawyer who after the collapse of France climbed back to power as Vice-Premier in the Vichy Government. Centre, M. Pierre Etienne Flandin, chief representative of the Right Wing policies in France. Right, M. Georges Bonnet, responsible for France's detachment from her obligations to Czechoslovakia.

Photos, E.N.A., Central Art Library









Photos, U.N.A.

THEY WOULD NOT TRUCKLE TO NAZIS

Left, M. André Geraud, the famous French political writer well known under the pseudonym of "Pertinax." When France fell he went to America and his fortune was confiscated by the Vichy Government. Right, M. Raoul Dautry, French Minister of Armaments and formerly Chief Engineer of the Compagnie du Nord railway.

kept in demoralizing and dangerous inactivity. During those months a torrent of German propaganda was being directed at them, and nothing was done from the French and but little from the British side to counteract this poisonous form of modern German warfare.

To revert to the French peasants, turned soldiers after September, 1939. These millions of men cherished no aggressive ambitions. Nor had they any personal ill-feeling towards the Germans, whom they believed to be fundamentally decent, if misguided, fellows like themselves. They would have attacked them had they been ordered to do so; but they were not. Meanwhile, whenever they went home on leave they were met with derision. "Is that your war?" people said, and intimated that life in the Maginot Line or in comfortable winter quarters was infinitely easier and more pleasurable than carrying on the work in the villages and in the factories. And there were the harvest, the vineyards, the cattle, and everything else to be looked after—labour which had now devolved on the women and old men. After eight months of "phony" war the French peasant soldier had only one desire—to return to his farm, to his family and to his work.

The Mind of the Peasants

It sounds paradoxical, but it can be argued that if blood had been shed on an impressive scale from the very outset of hostilities this feeling of frustration would never have arisen. The sons of France would have defended their native soil as their fathers did in 1914 and their grandfathers in 1870.

As a mitigating circumstance in the faulty direction of the military leaders it is often advanced that the demographic factor was omnipresent in their minds. With so poor a birthrate, it is argued, the leaders were anxious not to squander French lives, and were justified in feeling that France could not afford to lose a couple of million men every twenty years. This argument, no doubt, had its influence, but it is not wholly convincing. After all, the trouble of France was not so much that her birthrate was low but that infantile mortality was high. Moreover, was not the sacrifice of French life a lesser evil to choose than German domination—with all the calamities and humiliations that were bound to follow?

Yet, with men like Pétain, this argument must have weighed heavily when he sued for an armistice. Even during the war of 1914–18, though unquestionably a great soldier, he was notorious for his pessimism, while Pétain's reluctance to risk French lives resulted in many conflicts with Clemenceau, who had to push him along and pull him into action almost continuously. Now, at 84, the Marshal's ancient foibles had become something of a mania. The defeatists and traitors, who knew how to pander to his immeasurable vanity, exploited that lamentable old man to the full. They used him and Weygand—aged 73—to cover up with their military authority an operation of gigantic political fraud perpetrated on the French nation, which was deliberately kept in the utmost ignorance of the true facts and was stunned beyond belief when the blow fell.

The collapse of France, when everything is considered, was due primarily to the fact that all the forces of disruption, all the processes of decomposition, suddenly converged in one point. This gave a gang of malfeasant civilians and army men, who cared only for their personal and caste interests, a unique opportunity of committing wholesale treason and of perpetrating a crime unprecedented in history.



FROM FIGHTING TO FARMING

Here a French soldier, demobilized after the collapse of France, has returned to his farm and helps to get in the harvest. But the grain is more likely to go to Germany than to profit his own countrymen.

Photo, Wide World

Historic Documents. CXLVII–CXLIX

AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF FRANCE

Between June 17, when a newly-appointed French Government sued for the cessation of hostilities, and June 22, when Hitler made known his terms for an armistice, leaders in Britain and France tried to assign reasons for the great disaster. Here we reproduce part of a survey of the war situation made by Mr. Churchill in Parliament, and later broadcast; General de Gaulle's passionate protest against surrender; and Marshal Pétain's defeatist message to the French nation.

MR. CHURCHILL, IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, JUNE 18, 1940:

I SPOKE the other day of the colossal military disaster which occurred when the French High Command failed to withdraw the Northern Armies from Belgium at the moment when they knew that the French Front was decisively broken at Sedan and on the Meuse. This delay entailed the loss of fifteen or sixteen French Divisions and threatened the whole of the British Expeditionary Force.

Our Army and 120,000 French troops were, indeed, rescued by the British Navy from Dunkirk, but only with the loss of all their cannon, vehicles and modern equipment. This loss inevitably took some weeks to repair, and in the first two of those weeks the battle in France has been lost.

When we consider the heroic resistance made by the French Army at heavy odds in this battle and the enormous losses inflicted on the enemy, it may well be that these twenty-five divisions of the best trained and best equipped troops would have turned the scale. However, General Weygand had to fight without them. Only three British divisions or their equivalent were able to stand in the line with their French comrades. They have suffered severely, but they have fought well.

We sent every man we could to France as fast as we could re-equip and transport their formations. I am not reciting these facts for any purpose of recrimination. That I judge to be utterly futile and even harmful. We cannot afford it. I recite them in order to explain why it was that we did not have, as we could have had, between twelve and fourteen British divisions fighting in the line in this great battle instead of only three. I now put this aside on the shelf where future historians, when they have time, will find their documents. We have to think of the future and not of the past. . . .

We do not yet know what will happen in France, or whether French resistance will be prolonged both in France and in the French Empire overseas. The French Government will be throwing away great opportunities and casting away their future if they do not continue the war in accordance with their treaty obligations, from which we have not felt able to release them.

The House will have read the historic declaration in which, at the desire of many Frenchmen and of our own hearts, we have proclaimed our willingness to conclude, at the darkest hour of French history, a union of common citizenship. However matters may go in France, or with the French Government, or with another French Government, we in this island and in the British Empire will never lose our sense of comradeship with the French people. If we are now called upon to endure what they have suffered we shall emulate their courage and, if final victory rewards our toil, they shall share the gains, aye, and freedom shall be restored to all. We abate nothing of our just demands—Czechs, Poles, Norwegians, Dutch, Belgians, all who have joined their causes to our own, shall be restored.

What General Weygand called the "Battle of France" is over. I expect that the "Battle of Britain" is about to begin . . . .

GENERAL DE GAULLE, IN A BROADCAST SPEECH FROM LONDON, JUNE 18, 1940:

THE generals who for many years have commanded the French armies have formed a Government. That Government, alleging that our armies have been defeated, has opened negotiations with the enemy to put an end to the fighting.

We certainly have been, and still are, submerged by the mechanical strength of the enemy, both on land and in the air. The tanks, the aeroplanes, the tactics of the Germans, far more than their numbers, were responsible for our retirement. The tanks, the aeroplanes, the tactics of the Germans astounded our generals to such an extent that they have been brought to the pass which they are in today.

But has the last word been said? Has all hope disappeared? Is the defeat final? No. Believe me, I speak with knowledge and I tell you that France is not lost. The same methods which have brought about our defeat may quite well one day bring victory.

For France is not alone. She is not alone—she is not alone. She has a vast empire behind her. She can unite with the British Empire, which holds the seas and is continuing the struggle. She can utilise to the full, as England is doing, the vast industrial resources of the United States.

This war is not limited to the unhappy territory of our country. This war has not been decided by the Battle of France. This war is a world war. In spite of all our mistakes, all our deficiencies, all our sufferings, there are in the universe sufficient means to enable us one day to crush our enemies. Shattered today by mechanical force, we shall be able to conquer in the future by stronger mechanical force. The fate of the world depends on it.

I, General de Gaulle, now in London—I invite all French officers and men who are on British soil, or who may arrive here with or without their arms, I invite the engineers and the skilled workmen of the armament industries who are now on British soil, or who may arrive here, to get into touch with me. Whatever happens the flame of French resistance must not and shall not be extinguished.

MARSHAL PÉTAIN, FRENCH PRIME MINISTER, IN A BROADCAST ADDRESS, JUNE 20, 1940:

FRENCH people! I have asked the enemy to put an end to hostilities. The Government yesterday appointed plenipotentiaries to receive their conditions. I took this decision with the stout heart of a soldier because the military situation imposed it.

We had hoped to resist on the Somme-Aisne line. General Weygand had regrouped our forces, and his name alone presaged victory. The line yielded, however, under the pressure of the enemy and our troops were forced to retreat. From June 13 the request for an armistice was inevitable. The blow surprised you, and, remembering 1914–18, you sought the reasons for it. I am going to give you them.

On May 1, 1917, we still had 3,280,000 men under arms, in spite of three years of murderous fighting. On the eve of the present battle we had 500,000 fewer. In May, 1918, we had 85 British divisions; in May, 1940, we only had 10. In 1918 we had with us 58 Italian divisions and 42 American divisions.

The inferiority of our material was even greater than that of our effectives. French aviation has fought at odds of one to six. Not so strong as twenty-two years ago, we had also fewer friends, too few children, too few arms, too few allies. This is the cause of our defeat.

The French people do not deny the blow. All peoples have known ups and downs. It is by the way they react that they show themselves to be weak or great. We will learn a lesson from the battle which has been lost. Since victory the spirit of pleasure has prevailed over the spirit of sacrifice. People have demanded more than they have given, they have wanted to spare themselves effort. Today misfortune comes.

I was with you in the glorious days. As head of the Government I will remain with you in the dark days. Stand by me. The fight still goes on. It is for France, the soil of her sons.



A PANZER DIVISION ATTACKS IN FRANCE

The photographs in this page, which come from German official sources, show two phases in the advance of a German Panzer division (mechanized troops) during the Battle of France. Above, the start: an advance troop of infantry goes forward with the tanks. Below, the first wave of German tanks going into action in the direction of a wood. A. Heavy tanks in the front line of the attack. B. Light tanks and trucks containing artillery. C. Motor-cyclists with sidecars. D. Anti-aircraft unit. E. Advance troop of infantry. *Photos: Wide World*



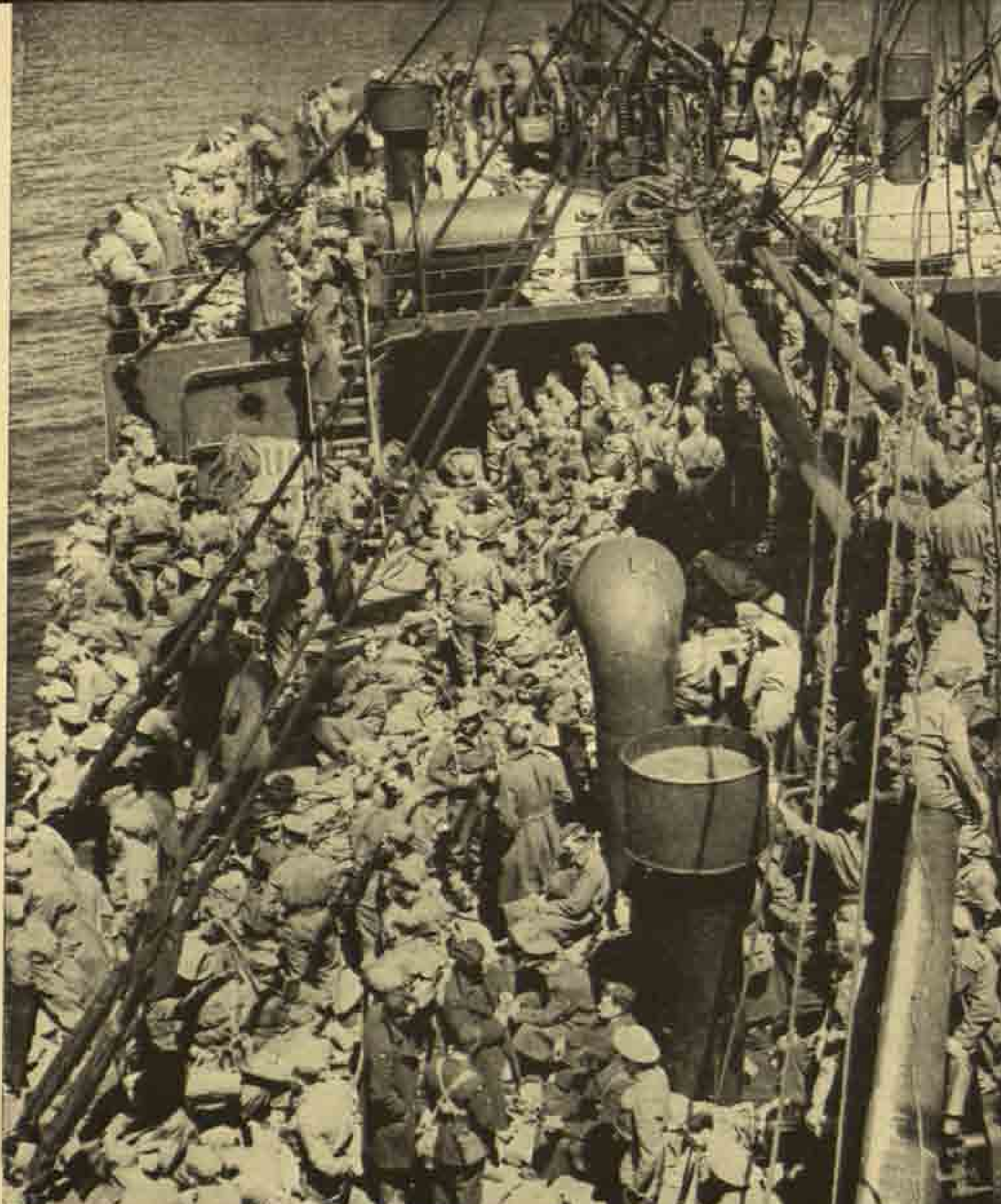


FLAMES ROB NAZIS OF PRIZED BOOTY

Here is one of the many lorries laden with British soldiers which in June, 1940, sped over the cobbled roads of France to the embarkation ports from which the B.E.F. was evacuated. Then came the heartbreaking job of destroying the lorries, some of which are seen below ablaze, near St. Nazaire, so that they should not fall, a useful prize, into the hands of the Nazis.

British Official: Crown Copyright





HOMEWARD BOUND: THE FINAL EVACUATION

After the swift drama of the Battle of France, which led to the fall of Paris on June 14, 1940, it was realized that further large-scale resistance was out of the question; those units of the B.E.F. which were still left in France after the evacuation from Dunkirk began to make their way to the coast, where evacuation took place from ports not yet in German hands. Above are some of the B.E.F. on their way back to their homeland.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



CHERBOURG'S LAST MOMENTS AS A WORKING PORT

Here, on the quayside at Cherbourg, are camouflaged lorries, seen as some of the last of the B.E.F. left France for England. As soon as the men and as much equipment as possible had been taken on board, and the vessels were clear, the long lines of quays at France's great transatlantic port were blown up. Demolition squads of the R.E., working in cooperation with the Navy, destroyed the harbour works and sent the great cranes toppling over into the sea.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Chapter 97

THE FINAL EVACUATION OF THE BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE FROM FRANCE

Perilous Position of the B.E.F. on the Allied Left—Withdrawal of the Advanced Air Striking Force—The Race to the Remaining Channel Ports—A Tank Division at Cherbourg—Scenes at Brest and St. Malo—Leaving Nothing Useful to the Enemy—Sinking of the 'Lancastria' at St. Nazaire

(The detailed story of the 51st (Highland) Division is told in Chapter 149)

WHEN the Germans crossed the Seine in overwhelming strength and pushed rapidly down the Channel coast and across the rich plains of Normandy, the position of the British forces on the extreme left of the Allied line became increasingly difficult, and, very shortly, precarious. The Weygand Zone was in dissolution; anything in the nature of a fixed line was no longer to be found. Everywhere the front was essentially fluid; day by day, hour by hour even, the tide of battle moved on. Here and there counter-attacks were delivered, but they did little or nothing to check the Nazis' progress. With irresistible force the invaders drove the British and French before them, until the whole of northern and north-western France was in their hands.

Not at first was it generally realized in the Allied camp that after the collapse of the positions on the Somme no further stand on a grand scale was possible, although it was recognized that the French had been terribly tried in the Battle of the Rivers, while as for the B.E.F., amazingly fortunate as it had been in its escape from Dunkirk, it could hardly be re-equipped in time to play a fresh part in the struggle. For a time there was talk, hope even, of a stand to the north-west of Paris, to the west, even to the south-west on the banks of the Loire, but the Loire hardly constitutes a formidable military obstacle, and in those weeks of summer it was a shallow stream enough. When Paris fell on June 14 the situation must have seemed well-nigh desperate. Already, indeed, the British units, military and air, had begun to make their way to the coast, where they expected to find the way of salvation opened before them.

After the Somme Collapse

Most of the original B.E.F. had taken part in the hurried march to Louvain and the even more hurried retreat to Dunkirk. The 51st (Highland) Division, which had been holding a sector of the Maginot Line, was heavily engaged in the Somme battles and, as we have seen (see page 954), was brought to bay at St. Valery, where all that were left of two of its three brigades were compelled to surrender. The third brigade, which had been defending the Havre area, was safely evacuated to England. There remained a large number of units of various size and description—headquarter troops, engineers and pioneers, signallers, men of the R.A.S.C. and the R.A.O.C., and so on—who were spread over the towns and villages of a great area in Northern France. Then there was also the Advanced Air Striking Force—squadrons of the R.A.F. who for weeks past had been in the air from dawn to dusk, defending the French infantry and guns from the attacks of the Nazi bombers and affording them immense assistance in the way of destroying bridges, attacking columns of troops and overtaking and smashing the roving tanks.

One by one the squadrons of the A.A.S.F. were moved back from the front as the aerodromes which they had been occupying for months past were brought within range of the enemy's guns. New aerodromes were established farther back, but it was realized that these would be but temporary. Through the night convoys of lorries roared along the roads, taking back the stores and equipment, and the 'planes, too, were

SMOKE BLOTS OUT SKY AT LE HAVRE

Little of military importance was found in Le Havre, the great French seaport, when the Germans took possession of it on June 14, 1940, for German and, later, British aircraft had destroyed everything of military value. Below, huge columns of smoke are seen rising from the vicinity of the docks after a German air attack.

Photo, Keystone







FRENCH HARBOURS ABLAZE
French sailors leaving Brest for England watch fires raging on shore as stores and munitions in the French naval base are blown up before the Germans arrive. Right, the harbour at St. Malo is seen after its destruction by British demolition parties. Brest and St. Malo were captured by the Germans between June 20 and 22, 1940.
Photos, Fox; "Daily Mirror"

aiding in the ferry work. Up to the very last the fighters and bombers continued their offensive activity, until they received orders to make the final hop across the Channel to aerodromes at home.

As for the troops, they were collected so far as was possible under various commands. Then, fighting all the way, often against an enemy who appeared to be attacking from every side at once, they, too, gradually retreated to the coast. Most of them reached it; and most, too—the principal exceptions being the two brigades of the 51st Division mentioned above—were successfully embarked, just as the great mass of the B.E.F. had been a fortnight or so before. Throughout, it was a race with the encompassing Germans, whose armoured cars and tanks sped along the highways in the hope of cutting off the still obstinately resisting rearguards. As the days went by the difficulties of evacuation were increased, for port after port which had appeared as a haven of refuge was occupied by the Nazi hordes. Le Havre was the first to go, being entered by the Germans on June 14; Cherbourg was occupied on June 18, Brest on June 20, and St. Malo on June 22—so swift was the enemy's advance, so overwhelming the ubiquity of the pursuing columns.

Fighting a Way to the Coast

At each port in turn large numbers of men, together with considerable quantities of war stores of every description, were safely got on board the ships which the naval authorities had been able to collect. But in each port, too, far larger quantities of war material had to be abandoned to the enemy. Whenever possible, however, the tanks and lorries, the guns and ammunition, the foodstuffs and dumps of petrol and oil were smashed or fired, so that the enemy on his arrival should find nothing of value—nothing but smoking heaps and piles of shattered rubbish.

At Cherbourg a British tank division which had fought a gallant rearguard action on the Somme and then later on the Seine was got safely away on June 18. The scene was described by a French naval officer on his arrival in England. "They came rumbling into Cherbourg in the evening," he said. "Half the population had already left. Those who had resolved to stay were putting up their shutters and barricading themselves in their houses. The Germans were only a few miles away. All along the quays there were British Marines drilling holes to lay dynamite. The big quay where passengers used to land from America was a weird sight. Hundreds of army vehicles stood wheel to wheel. Under this quayside were hundreds of sticks of dynamite.

"The first to be got aboard were the British tanks. An officer volunteered



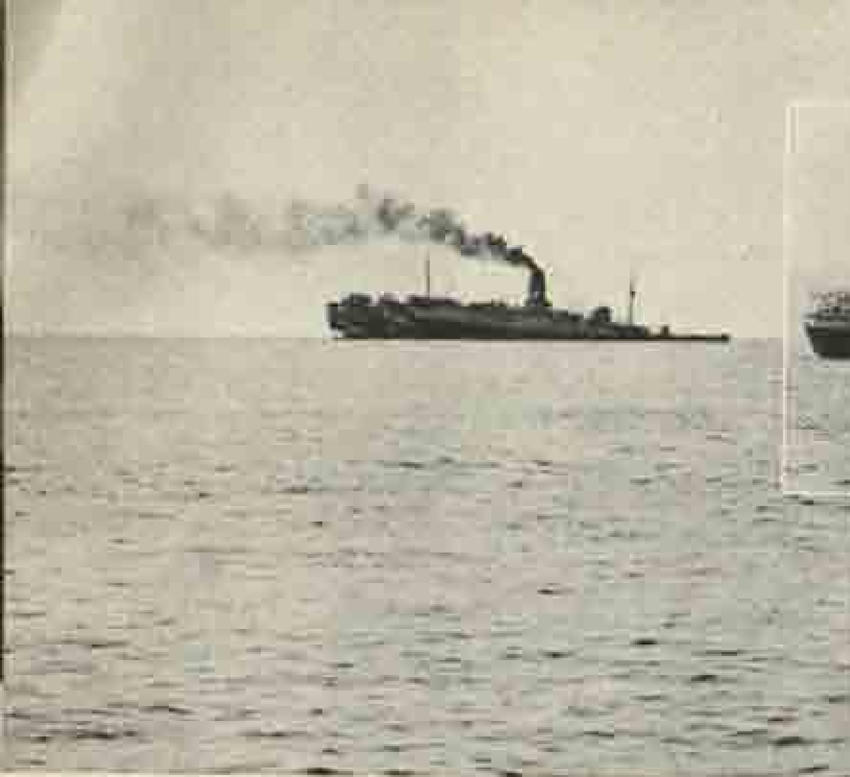


LAST HOURS OF THE B.E.F. AT CHERBOURG

The Germans occupied Cherbourg on June 18, 1940, after many of the B.E.F. had successfully got away. What equipment could not be embarked was destroyed to prevent it falling into enemy hands, and the top photograph shows motor transport burning in fields outside the town. In the centre photo, British troops are seen making their way to the quayside for evacuation. Below, abandoned lorries used as road blocks on the outskirts of Cherbourg.

Photos, Ministry of Information







LOSS OF THE 'LANCASTRIA'

The Cunard liner 'Lancastria' (16,243 tons) was sunk by a formation of Junkers 87 dive-bombers off St. Nazaire on June 17, 1940. There were about 5,000 British troops on board, and more than 2,000 of them were lost. Our photographs show: above, the 'Lancastria' in her cruise-liner days; left, settling down after the enemy attack; below, heeling over, her propellers above water; bottom, troops clustered on the hull and in the water. Many were rescued by the Royal Navy.

Photos, Associated Press







NAVY CONVOYS REFUGEES

The Canadian destroyer 'Fraser' is seen above off St. Jean de Luz, French watering-place near the Spanish border, accompanying small Basque fishing boats full of refugees who were embarked on the cargo boat 'Baron Nairn,' the last ship to take British subjects and allied refugees from the town. The destroyer was soon afterwards sunk in collision.

to take two small tanks out of the town to clear the roads of any Germans. When he got to the last barricade guarding the town, the French infantry holding it told him they were awaiting orders to evacuate and move south. The British tank officer said to them: 'Well, have a good look at these tanks, and don't fire when we come back, if you are still here.' The two tanks sailed through, and after patrolling a mile or two they turned back. Immediately they got to the barricade the officer opened the turret of the tank and waved his British tin helmet. Then he had to duck back as a machine-gun opened on him from the barricade.

"There was nothing for it but to fight, and after about fifteen minutes the tanks demolished the barricade and overcame the defenders. Anxious to find out why they had been attacked, the officer got down and examined the arms of the dead. They were all German, though the barricade defenders wore French uniforms. They were parachutists dropped overnight.

"When the two tanks arrived at the quayside the embarkation was almost complete. They had only just time to go on board themselves. Power had been cut off, and the cranes could not be used to lift the tanks on board. So they were sent crashing down the rocks to the sea. At twelve o'clock the last ship put out.

"I was on board," continued the naval officer whose story we quote. "The only craft in the harbour was a small motor-boat manned by British Marines, lying in the shelter of the breakwater, and waiting to touch a switch which would send the docks of Cherbourg, and all those motor-lorries lined up on the quayside, sky-high. From two miles out at sea we saw the great port's end. The long line of quays lifted slowly into the air, then suddenly broke into segments, while hundreds of minor explosions broke out. Then a great column of smoke rose up over the port and hung



DESTRUCTION AT DIEPPE

The port of Dieppe, well known to British tourists, was raided by German aircraft during the Nazi advance into Normandy. Above is seen the wreckage resulting from an attack by German dive-bombers, which destroyed vessels at anchor and caused much damage to the port.

Photo, E.N.A.



BACK TO BRITAIN WITH SMILING FACES

Successfully evacuated from a port in north-western France, these men of the B.E.F. were glad to set foot again on English soil after their gruelling experiences in the Battle of France. One man leads a bull terrier which belonged to a subaltern of the Queen's Bays who did not return.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

there like a black cloud in the sky as we headed for England."

Similar scenes were enacted at Brest, France's great Atlantic port. In its harbour were packed ships of every kind and size. As many as possible were got away to England, from merchant ships to the monster submarine "Surcouf." When they had gone, or while they were still leaving, volunteer demolition squads from the Royal Engineers, working in close cooperation with the Royal Navy, blew up the harbour works and sent the heavy cranes crashing into the docks. They did not leave until the place was a blazing ruin, and over all hung thick clouds of black smoke from the oil dumps which had also been fired. When the Nazis entered the town a few hours later they found that theirs was a hollow capture.

The port of St. Malo, too, was practically destroyed by British demolition parties. "I saw the total destruction of the harbour after all the British troops had been safely evacuated on June 18," said Mr. Le Marquand, owner of an auxiliary yacht, when he returned to a British port. "The Germans were then reported to be fast approaching, but the British naval officer in charge of the demolition party was amazingly cool. He would not allow his men to take any risks—he stood alone in the open to watch the destruction. Once, when four charges were ignited, it was doubtful whether all had exploded.

The men were definite that three had, but some of them wanted to venture into the danger zone to see what had happened to the fourth. The officer refused to allow them to leave cover. A few seconds later a deafening explosion from the fourth charge hurled portions of the dock gates into the air. Amid all this the officer still took no cover, but stood alone while all the debris was flying about and dropping all around him. He seemed to have a charmed life."

Another eye-witness of the amazing spectacle was the Countess de Pret. "After all the scenes of panic in France," she said, "it was wonderful to see the calmness with which the British officers and soldiers carried out their duties at St. Malo. Although the Germans were within a few miles, the British made a thorough job of the demolition of the harbour. They blew up everything, and the harbour will be out of use for at least two years. We also learned that the British had made Cherbourg useless as a port and had destroyed the harbour works there."

But the most dramatic, the most heartrending scenes were witnessed at St. Nazaire, the port on the Bay of Biscay where men of the first B.E.F. landed in France in the autumn of 1914. In the harbour on June 17 was the great

Cunard White Star liner "Lancastria," which, with many other ships, was engaged in evacuating troops. Time after time the German bombers came over, and it was in one of the many raids that the "Lancastria" was hit. The ship had just been crammed with some 4,000—the exact number has never been ascertained—British soldiers, in addition to some 600 R.A.F. officers and men of the A.A.S.F., and a few British civilians who had held official positions in France. Most of the soldiers had come from Nantes, which had been designated an assembly point for the various units, and they had proceeded to St. Nazaire because this was practically the last port available for their evacuation. The embarkation was complete when a strong formation of Junkers 87 dive-bombers made their appearance, and three bombs hit the "Lancastria." Almost immediately the great ship heeled over and sank in about half an hour. Great numbers of the men—soldiers, airmen, and the ship's crew—were lost, whether killed by the explosion or by the 'planes' machine-guns, or drowned as they struggled in the water. It was feared that more than 2,000 lost their lives, and the casualties would have been even greater if warships of the Royal Navy had not swiftly come upon the scene and, amid cheers and cries of "The Navy's here," engaged forthwith in the work of rescue. Some 'planes of the R.A.F. also arrived and dropped lifebelts. Eventually some 2,500 survivors were landed at a West of England port.

On the 'Lancastria'

"As soon as we were struck," said a member of the "Lancastria's" crew, "I pushed my way through the mass of soldiers towards one of the lifeboats. Already it was full right up with men, and when I moved them the others all surged towards the boat hoping they would get a place aboard. Just then the 'Lancastria' gave a terrific lurch to port and all the men were thrown from one side of her to the other. I slid on my back down the deck, which was an enormous slant. I was flung into the sea, which can only be described as being one almost solid mass of men clinging together like flies and covered with thick black oil. Some of them were horribly burnt by the explosion, others were hanging on to debris, others were swimming until they finally sank; it was every man for himself. All this time the three aeroplanes were still above us and they continually swooped and bombed the oily waters and their machine-gunners fired on the men struggling for their lives in the water."

One of the Army officers who was saved said that the 'planes were only 200 feet up when they first came over. "I thought they were British. Then the 'Lancastria' was hit. As she went down I waited until her deck was awash, then stepped into the sea. I still had on my tin hat. It was just as well, because when we were all in the water the 'planes still went on dropping bombs. As they hit the sea their force lifted us right out of it. The most dreadful thing was the cries of those who couldn't swim, and there weren't enough lifebelts to go round. You heard, 'Help me! I can't swim'—and you couldn't do anything. But the courage shown was magnificent. Those who could swim sang as they swam."

So the last of the B.E.F. left France. They had landed in September only nine months before. But those nine months had been packed with events and experiences hard to rival in the world's history. They had endured a winter of boredom and of waiting, a spring of anticipation, and a summer of fiercest war. There had been the march to Louvain, the retreat to Dunkirk, the stand on the Seine, the surrender at St. Valery. All these lay behind the great clouds of smoke which, billowing up from the wrecked and debris-cluttered wharves, hid the coast of France from the eyes of those whom the ships bore away.



STILL FREE TO FIGHT

Among the Allied troops evacuated from north-western France were many Polish soldiers, who are shown above disembarking from one of the transports at a West Country port. Also on the vessel were civilian refugees, some of whom are seen still on board.

Photo, "News Chronicle"

RALLYING CALLS TO THE FRENCH NATION

Reactions to the humiliating terms of the Franco-German Armistice were typical of the sources from which they sprang. Mr. Churchill, sorrowful but resolute, appealed to all Frenchmen outside German clutches to aid in their country's liberation; General de Gaulle announced the formation of a French National Committee; Marshal Pétain could only exhort France to work and suffer with patience.

MR. CHURCHILL, IN AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT, JUNE 23, 1940:

His Majesty's Government have heard with grief and amazement that the terms dictated by the Germans have been accepted by the French Government at Bordeaux. They cannot feel that such or similar terms could have been submitted to by any French Government which possessed freedom, independence and constitutional authority. Such terms, if accepted by all Frenchmen, would place not only France but the French Empire at the mercy and in the power of the German and Italian dictators.

Not only would the French people be held down and forced to work against their Ally, not only would the soil of France be used with the approval of the Bordeaux Government as the means of attacking their Ally, but the whole resources of the French Empire and of the French Navy would speedily pass into the hands of the adversary for the fulfilment of his purpose.

His Majesty's Government firmly believe that whatever happens they will be able to carry the war, wherever it may lead, on the sea, in the air and upon land, to a successful conclusion. When Great Britain is victorious she will, in spite of the action of the Bordeaux Government, cherish the cause of the French people, and a British victory is the only possible hope for the restoration of the greatness of France and the freedom of its people.

Brave men from other countries overrun by Nazi invasion are steadfastly fighting in the ranks of freedom. Accordingly His Majesty's Government call upon all Frenchmen outside the power of the enemy to aid them in their task and thereby render its accomplishment more sure and more swift. They appeal to all Frenchmen, wherever they may be, to aid to the utmost of their strength the forces of liberation, which are enormous and which, if faithfully and resolutely used, will assuredly prevail.

MARSHAL PÉTAIN, IN A BROADCAST ADDRESS, JUNE 23:

The French Government and people heard the statement of Mr. Churchill with grief and amazement. We can understand the anguish that prompted it. Mr. Churchill fears that the fate that has fallen upon our country during the past month may overtake his own. Mr. Churchill is a good judge of the interest of his country, but not of ours, and still less of French honour. Our flag remains unstained. Our Army has fought loyally. Inferior in armaments and in numbers, it had to ask for a cessation of the fighting. It did so, I affirm, in independence and in dignity. No one will succeed in dividing Frenchmen in the hour when their country is suffering. France has spared neither her efforts nor her blood. She feels that she has earned the respect of the world. . . .

GENERAL DE GAULLE, FORMER FRENCH UNDER-SECRETARY FOR WAR, IN A BROADCAST FROM LONDON, JUNE 23:

The Armistice accepted by the Bordeaux Government is a capitulation. This capitulation was signed before all means of resistance had been exhausted. This capitulation delivers into the hands of the enemy, who will use them against our Allies, our arms, our aeroplanes, our warships, our gold. This capitulation utterly reduces France and places the Government of Bordeaux in immediate and direct dependence on the Germans and Italians.

There is no longer on the soil of France itself an independent government capable of upholding the interests of France, and the French are no longer in a position to function freely, and the people of France have at the moment no opportunity of expressing their true will.

Consequently, and owing to force majeure, a French National Committee will be formed in agreement with the British Government representing the interests of the country and the people, and resolved to maintain the independence of France, to honour the alliances to which she is committed, and to contribute to the war efforts of the Allies until the final victory. . . .

The war is not lost, the country is not dead, hope is not extinct. Vive la France!

MR. CHURCHILL, IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, JUNE 25:

The House will feel profound sorrow at the fate of the great French nation and people, with whom we have been joined so long in war and peace and whom we have regarded as trustees with ourselves for the progress of a liberal culture and tolerant civilisation in Europe.

There is no use or advantage in wasting strength and time upon hard words and reproaches. We hope that life and power will be given to us to rescue France from the ruin and bondage into which she has been cast by the might and fury of the enemy. We hope, however, that the French Empire, stretching all over the world and still protected by sea power, will continue the struggle at the side of its Allies. We hope that it may become the seat of a Government which will strive steadfastly for victory and will organize armies of liberation. These are matters which Frenchmen alone can decide.

We find it difficult to believe that the interests of France and the spirit of France will find no other expression than in the melancholy decisions which have been taken by the Government of Bordeaux. We shall certainly aid to the best of our ability and resources any Movement of Frenchmen outside the power of the enemy to work for the defeat of Nazi German barbarism and for the freedom and restoration of France. . . .

We do not know whether we shall be able to have any British representative in the restricted region called "Unoccupied France," because that is entirely surrounded by and under the control of the enemy. But, relying upon the true genius of the French people and their judgement of what has happened to them when they are allowed to know the facts, we shall endeavour to keep such contacts as are possible through the bars of their prison.

MARSHAL PÉTAIN, IN A BROADCAST ADDRESS TO THE FRENCH NATION, JUNE 25:

First we must stress the fact that France and her Allies had great illusions about their material strength and the importance of the blockade and wealth in raw materials. To achieve victory men and materials are necessary. Events showed that, in this respect, Germany had an overwhelming superiority, against which we could only oppose words and speeches. . . .

The Government were forced to choose between remaining where they were or going overseas. They decided to remain in France in order to preserve the unity of the French people and to represent it in face of the adversary. They were of the opinion that it was their duty to assure an acceptable armistice by making an appeal to the honour and reason of the opponent. I was ready to continue the fight, but then —should we prolong it in the colonies? I could not agree to the continued shedding of French blood. The conditions of the Armistice safeguard the ties which unite the metropolis with the colonies.

France must give more thought to her future than to anything else. All her efforts must be to organize peace. A new order of things begins. You will soon return to your homes. Some of you will have to reconstruct them. You have suffered, and you will still suffer. But with a strong will we shall reconstruct. The land remains, and that is the Fatherland itself.

THE FRENCH ARMISTICE: EVENTS DURING JUNE, 1940

Reactions to the German Offensive of June 5—Reynaud Reconstructs His Cabinet—Italy Declares War—British Ministers Hurry to Tours for Consultations—Paris in German Hands—'Final Appeal' to Roosevelt—Whisperings of Surrender—British Anxiety About French Fleet—The 'Declaration of Union'—Fall of Reynaud: Pétain's Government Sues for Peace—Dregs of Bitterness at Compiègne: Dictators' Terms—The Farce Enacted at Rome

At the opening of the battle which was so shortly to decide her fate, France—and particularly Paris, which has been mistaken so often for France—presented quite a brave appearance to the world. Even after the disaster on the Meuse and the collapse in Flanders the French army was still several millions strong; the fighting spirit of the men was said to be unimpaired, and the massive line of fortifications in the east remained intact. So, too, was the French Fleet, while the Air Force was still formidable. True, those whose ears were attuned to the subterranean mutterings of the political world suspected that the censorship, so strictly applied, hid a multitude of defects and deficiencies, but Reynaud seemed firm enough in the saddle and as yet there was never a suggestion of surrender. The situation was serious; some permitted themselves to say that it was desperate. But M. Reynaud expressed himself in a spirit of confidence. He gave to the Military Mission of the Chamber on June 5 "reasons for hoping for a favourable outcome of the battle," and after paying tribute to the heroism of the French troops and the high morale of the nation, declared that France was "resolved more than ever to fight to the end with its allies for the liberty of the world." France's façade, then, was still solid with hardly a crack to be seen. But soon the cracks were to develop into fissures, and in an amazingly brief space the whole structure came tumbling down.

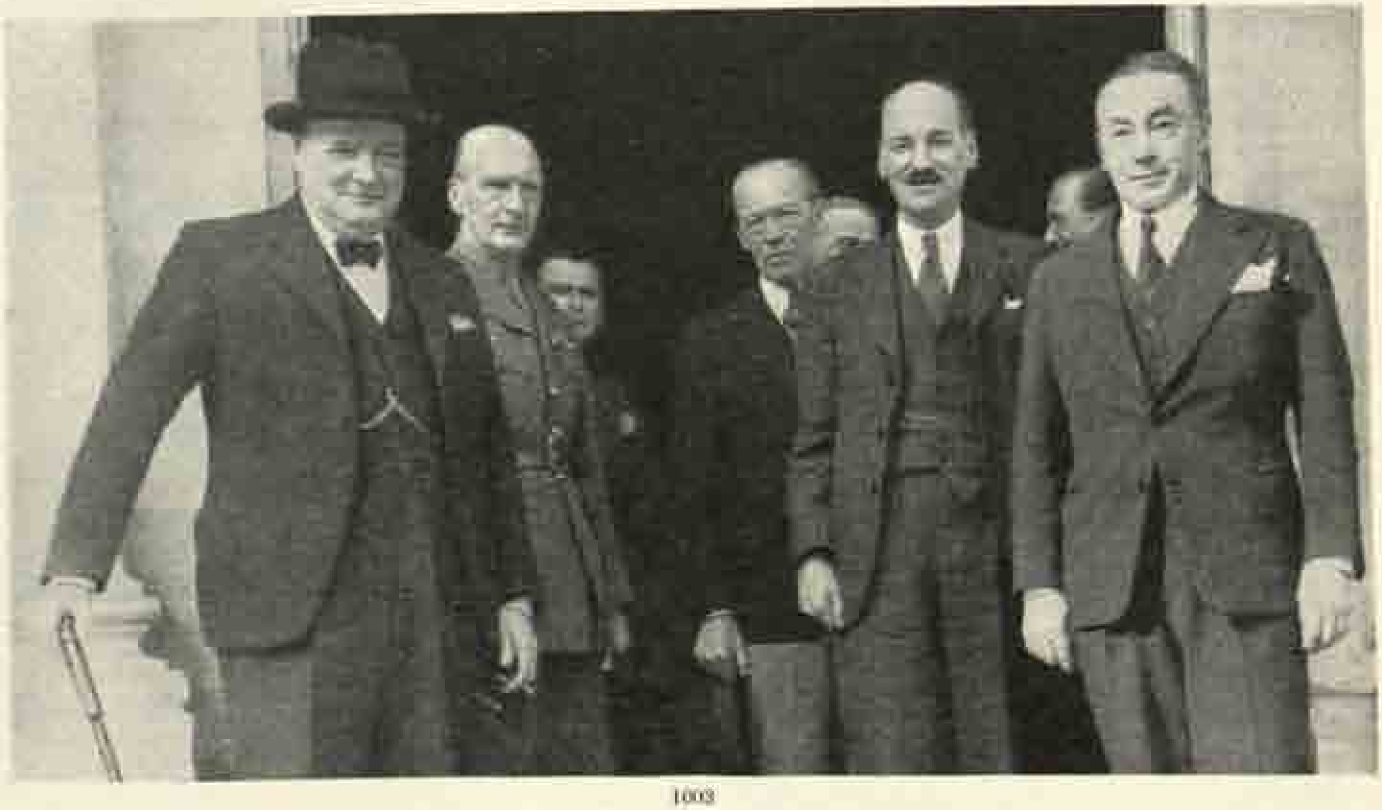
Shortly before daybreak on June 5 the Germans launched their great offensive, which had for its prime objectives the capture of Paris and the Channel Ports. Over a front of more than a hundred miles the battle raged throughout the day, and General Weygand's new defence line, or rather zone, was severely tried. The French official spokesman avowed that night that "the general impression is good," but all the same M. Reynaud decided that the situation was so critical that he was justified in thrusting diplomatic formality on one side and appealing direct to President Roosevelt for more aeroplanes to be supplied at once to the French Air Force.

Just before midnight the Cabinet met at the Elysée, and the long-simmering dissatisfaction of some of its members came to a head. When the Ministers dispersed, the Premier reconstituted his team, finally dropping M. Daladier and three of the ex-Premier's associates. In their place he admitted several newcomers, of whom the most important were General

PARIS MEETING OF WAR COUNCIL

A meeting of the Supreme War Council was held in Paris on May 31, 1940. Below, on the steps of the French War Ministry, are seen, from left to right: Mr. Winston Churchill, General Sir J. Dill, Sir Ronald Campbell (British Ambassador to France), Mr. Attlee and M. Paul Reynaud.

Photo, Associated Press





SERVICE OF INTERCESSION

During the battles on the Western Front a special service was held in the Paris Cathedral of Notre-Dame to pray for the victory of the Allied armies. Here, at the ceremony, are seen MM. Reynaud (left) and Daladier. Behind stands M. Jean Ybarnegaray, later Minister of Youth and Family in the Vichy Government.

Photo, Keystone

de Gaulle, who had recently achieved distinction on the battlefield when in command of an armoured division and who was now appointed Under-Secretary of State for War; M. Baudouin, who became Under-Secretary of the War Cabinet; and M. Prouvost, owner of the powerful newspaper "Paris Soir," who succeeded Mr. Frossard as Minister of Information. M. Reynaud himself, in addition to retaining the portfolios of National Defence and War, became Foreign Minister in place of M. Daladier. Twenty-four hours later the War Cabinet was reduced from eleven to eight members, viz. M. Reynaud, Marshal Pétain, Vice-Premier since 1918, and MM. Chautemps, Marin, Ybarnegaray, Mandel, Monnet and Dautry.

But no changes in the Government could compensate for deficiencies at the front. As day followed day the invaders drew ever nearer to Paris. The last Cabinet meeting to be held in the capital was on June 9, and by the next day most of the Ministers had left for Tours. That was the day on which Italy entered the war, and before he quitted Paris that night M. Reynaud broadcast to the French people a denunciation of Italy's act.

The Menace to Paris

"It is at just the very moment," he said, "when France, wounded but valiant and undaunted, is fighting against German hegemony for her own independence, as well as for that of the whole world, that Mussolini has chosen to declare war on us. How shall this act be judged?" he went on. "France has nothing to say. She enters this war with a clear conscience. . . ." It was Mussolini who had decided that "blood must flow."

Even more forthright was President Roosevelt. Flinging aside the least pretence to neutrality, he told the students of the University of Virginia at Charlottesville that "on this 10th day of June the hand that held the dagger has stuck it into the back of its neighbour. On this 10th day of June we send our prayers and our hopes to those countries beyond the seas who are maintaining with magnificent valour their battle for freedom. The United States will send its material resources to the aid of the Allies in their magnificent fight. . . . The signs and signals call for speed—full speed ahead; call for effort, courage, sacrifice, and devotion. Granting the love of freedom, all these are possible."

The President spoke before a further personal message from M. Reynaud (*see* page 982) was received in Washington. In this the Premier, while expressing his gratitude for the generous way in which the President had responded to the appeal he had made on June 5, declared that he now felt obliged to sue for even greater assistance.

"I beg you publicly to declare," he asked, "that the United States will accord the Allies their material supplies in every way short of sending an expeditionary corps. I beg you to do this before it is too late."

He prefaced his appeal by the dramatic statement that "the enemy has today nearly reached the gates of Paris. We shall fight in front of Paris, we shall fight behind Paris. We will shut ourselves into one of our provinces, and if we are driven out we will go to North Africa and, if necessary, into our possessions in America."

Britain was doing all in her power to assist her ally. "All available means," said Mr. Churchill in a message to M. Reynaud, "are being used to give help on land, sea and in the air. The R.A.F. has been continually engaged over the battlefields; and within the last few days fresh British forces have landed in France to take their place with those already engaged in the common struggle, while further extensive reinforcements are being rapidly organized and will shortly be available."

By June 11, the next day, most of the French Ministers had arrived in Tours, and M. Reynaud himself took up his quarters there after spending a night with the troops at the front. The Government established itself in an old château whose feudal arrangements were most obviously unsuited to the purpose to which it was now put, and in the town itself there was the utmost confusion, owing to the arrival of an enormous and ever-increasing number of refugees from Paris. Conditions in Tours were reported to be chaotic, indeed, when Mr. Churchill, Mr. Anthony Eden, and General Sir John Dill, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, arrived there by aeroplane to consult with their French colleagues. The discussions



M. CAMILLE CHAUTEMPS

M. Camille Chautemps, a former Premier, was appointed Vice-Premier in M. Reynaud's Cabinet in March, 1940. He remained in Marshal Pétain's Government after the French armistice, which he favoured.

Photo, Topical

PAINTINGS PROVIDE VIVID COMMENTARY ON BRITAIN AT WAR

A Selection of Striking Works by Well-known Artists produced during the First Three Years



SERGT. PARKER — Eric Kennington



CPL. ROBINS, M.M. — Laura Knight, R.A.



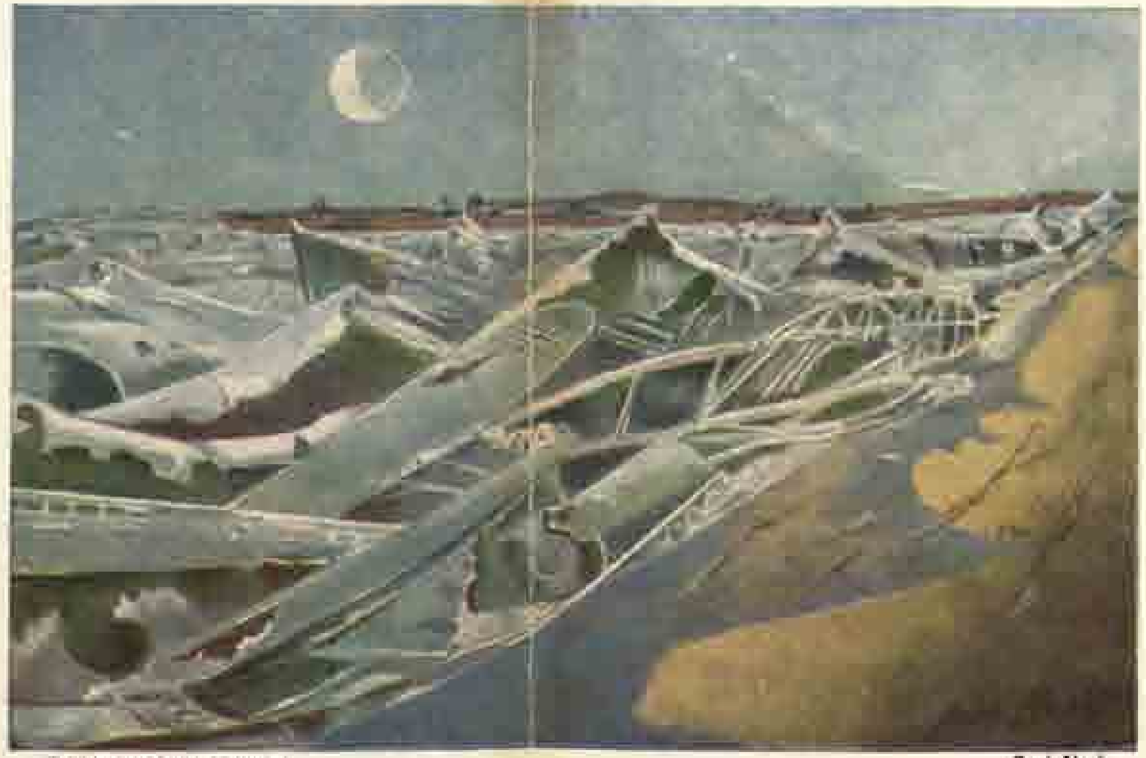
SQD. LDR. CROSSLEY — Eric Kennington



BATTLE OF BRITAIN — Paul Nash



COVENTRY — John Piper



TOTES MEER (Dead Sea) — Paul Nash



DEVASTATION 1941 : CITY Twisted Girders — Graham Sutherland



SHELTER SCENE Bunks and Sleepers — Henry Moore



DEVASTATION 1941 : CITY Fallen Lift Shaft — Graham Sutherland

BRITAIN at war has provided a fruitful field for the creative ability of the artist. In the myriad activities of her vast war effort, in the grim drama of her sufferings, in the calm courage of her fighting peoples, the painter has found a vital stimulus to his art more urgent, perhaps, than any that the years of peace could evoke. Some idea of the great variety of subjects that have inspired the officially appointed war artists alone may be gathered from the outstanding examples of their work in these pages. Here are descriptive records of permanent value bearing the deep impress of human experience

Exhibited at The National Gallery, London, 1940-1942.



A FOUNDRY — Graham Sutherland



ITALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR

Michael Ford



COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOUSE OF COMMONS

John Piper

extended far into the night, even into the next day. On his return to London Mr. Churchill issued a communiqué, as laconic as non-committal. "Complete agreement was reached," it read, "as to the measures to be taken to meet the developments of the war situation." Another of the British Ministers who visited France at this time was Lord Lloyd, who had been delegated to contact various members of the French Government and of the Colonial Office in particular—no doubt with reference to the fate of the French colonies in the event of the war in France taking a turn for the worse.

After Mr. Churchill's departure the French Cabinet met again at the Château de Congé, and received from General Weygand a gloomy report on the military situation.

Weygand's Pessimism

Now, apparently, it was that the question of an armistice was first mooted. Weygand was reported to have argued that not only was the cessation of hostilities highly advisable for military reasons, but that if an armistice were not concluded very shortly the country would be involved in a wave of social disasters. Descending into detail, he (so it was said) revealed that he had just been informed that Maurice Thorez, the Communist leader, was already installed in the Elysée; whereupon M. Mandel, the Minister of the Interior, telephoned M. Langeron, the Prefect of Paris, and learnt that the situation was quite normal and that there had been no signs of any Communist rising. This, at least, is what was rumoured. More certain is it that following the Cabinet meeting it was decided to ask Mr. Churchill to return to Tours with a view to further discussions, aimed in particular at relieving France from her obligation not to make a separate peace—that obligation which had been renewed in the most uncompromising manner as recently as March 28.

Accordingly, on June 13 Mr. Churchill, accompanied this time by Lord Halifax, Foreign Secretary, and Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Aircraft Production, again arrived in Tours. The French Cabinet began its sitting at 3 p.m., and after a further discussion of the question of applying for an armistice, suggested that Mr. Churchill should meet them in joint session. The British Premier declined the invitation, but had talks with M. Reynaud and M. Mandel, after which he started back again for London. At 5 o'clock MM. Reynaud and Mandel reported to the Cabinet on their interview with the British Ministers.

We have two versions of this affair. In his elaborate statement issued to American correspondents at Bordeaux on June 24, M. Prouvost, the French High Commissioner for Propaganda, stated that on June 12 M. Reynaud brought General Weygand to the Council of Ministers.

In the "most dramatic sitting which the French Government has ever known" the Generalissimo explained the military situation. Among the members of the Government the opinion which predominated was that France, with or without an armistice, could not escape total occupation. In this terrible eventuality the Council unanimously decided to ask Mr. Churchill to come to France to consult with it.

"The next day, at 3 p.m., the Council was convened to hear Mr. Churchill. For two hours the French ministers anxiously waited for the British Prime Minister. At 5 p.m. M. Reynaud and M. Mandel arrived and said that they had seen Mr. Churchill, but that the Prime Minister had had to leave for England. The Council then asked M. Reynaud what would be the opinion of Mr. Churchill should France be obliged to lay down her arms. M. Reynaud replied that in the first place, in agreement with Lord Halifax and Lord Beaverbrook, Mr. Churchill declared that the British Government would continue, as in the past, to give France the maximum military, air and naval aid in their power; but if, however, events should oblige France to ask Germany for an armistice, their opinion was that in no case would England reproach her ally in difficulties, and would understand the situation in which she found herself, very much against her will."

M. Prouvost went on to state that the decision to ask for an armistice



ROOSEVELT DENOUNCES MUSSOLINI

When Mussolini, thinking the struggle as good as over, declared war upon the Allies, his action was stigmatized by President Roosevelt (who referred to it, during the speech he is seen making on June 20, 1940) as "the hand that held the dagger, striking it into the back of its neighbour."

Photo, Planet News

was again postponed for 24 hours, so that they might receive a definite reply from President Roosevelt to France's supreme appeal for aid, and also because they desired to "inform London even more precisely of the situation and the consequences which it would entail." Then he attacked certain French ministers—M. Mandel in particular—who, though they had "received no mandate from the Government, intervened with the British Government, so that the declarations of Mr. Churchill, Lord Halifax and Lord Beaverbrook were not maintained, and Great Britain took a much less understanding and more imperative view of the situation."

Thus M. Prouvost's account; Mr. Churchill's differs in some very important particulars. Speaking on June 25, he declared that some accounts which had been given of his conversations with the Bordeaux Government did not at all correspond with the facts.

"M. Reynaud," he said, "after dwelling on the conditions at the front and the state of the French Army, with which I was well acquainted, asked me whether Great Britain would release France from her obligation not to negotiate for an armistice or peace without the consent of her British ally. Although I knew how great French sufferings were, and that we had not so far endured equal trials or made an equal contribution in the field, I felt bound to say that I could not give consent. I think there would be no use in adding mutual reproaches to the other miseries we might have to bear, but I could not give consent. We agreed that a further appeal should be made by M. Reynaud to the United States, and that if the reply was not sufficient to enable M. Reynaud to go on fighting—and he, after all, was the fighting spirit—then we should meet again and take a decision in the light of the new factors."

This last point, it may be remarked, is the vitally important one—that before application should be made for an armistice there should be another Anglo-French consultation.

After the British ministers had gone home M. Reynaud dispatched his "new and final appeal" to President Roosevelt.

"Each time that I have asked him to increase his help," he said in a broadcast that evening, "he has done so generously. But it is a question today of the future of France, of the very life of France. . . . Clouds of aeroplanes must assist us. Forces must come from the other side of the Atlantic and crush the evil forces which dominate Europe . . . we keep hope in our hearts." (See page 982.)

This "final appeal" was sent on the evening of June 13, but such was the confusion prevailing in Tours, it was not telegraphed until the following morning. News of its dispatch, however, had reached Washington, and at a press conference President Roosevelt said that, although the text of the appeal had not yet reached him, he had read it in the papers, and the answer was perfectly simple: "We are doing whatever we possibly can," the emphasis being on "possibly." The actual text of the appeal was not published, but it was believed that it was couched in even more urgent and dramatic terms than the broadcast. In British circles there was some resentment when it was learnt that the French Premier seemed to have implied that if France withdrew from the war, then Britain alone could not carry on the fight to victory. So far from accepting this defeatist view, it was stated in London that, whatever might be France's decision, Britain would continue the struggle.

Yet another message of encouragement was issued in London. "In this solemn hour," it said, "His Majesty's Government desire to pay to the Government of the French Republic the tribute which is due to the heroic fortitude and constancy of the French Armies in the battle against enormous odds." The pledge to the French Republic to continue the struggle at all costs, in France, in Britain, upon the oceans and in the air, was renewed, and the statement concluded with the proud resolve that "we shall never turn from the conflict until France stands safe and erect in all her grandeur . . ." (See page 982.)



BY FLYING-BOAT TO FRANCE

When it became clear to Britain that France was about to capitulate, Lord Lloyd (right), British Secretary for the Colonies, was flown to France to discuss the position of the French colonies. At the same time the First Sea Lord and the First Lord of the Admiralty flew to Bordeaux to talk over the position of the French fleet. They were piloted by Australian airmen attached to the Coastal Command in Short Sunderland flying-boats of the type shown below.

Photos, L.N.A.; British Official: Crown Copyright







LEADERS OF FREE FRANCE

After France's capitulation many Frenchmen continued the struggle from abroad in conjunction with Britain. Above is General Charles de Gaulle, an expert on mechanized warfare, who first raised the standard of Free France and became acknowledged leader of the army of Free Frenchmen. Right, Vice-Admiral Muselier, in command of the Free French naval forces.

Photos, Howard Coster : Keystone

One phrase in the statement—"we take this opportunity of proclaiming the indissoluble union of our two peoples and our two empires"—was a presage of the proposal for that dramatic Declaration of Union made three days later.

Paris was entered by the Germans on the morning of June 14, and on the same day the French Government found it imperative to leave Tours for Bordeaux, since, though the army was reported to be retreating in good order, the German columns were thrusting ever deeper into the heart of France.

By now there were rumours in many quarters that the French had decided on capitulation, but there was still some faint hope that the aid promised by America would arrive in time and in sufficient quantity to enable the struggle to be continued. On June 15 Lord Lothian, the British Ambassador in Washington, and the Comte de St. Quentin, his French colleague, conferred with Mr. Roosevelt on the subject of M. Reynaud's appeal for "clouds of 'planes," and they were informed that the President had already dispatched his reply. Soon after their departure from the White House the text of the President's cable was published. "I wish to reiterate," said the President, "that, making every possible effort under present conditions, the Government of the United States has made it possible for the Allied armies to obtain during the past weeks aeroplanes, artillery and munitions of many kinds, and that this Government, so long as the Allies continue to resist, will redouble its efforts in this direction." At the same time, the President made it clear that "these statements carry with them no implications of military commitments. Only Congress can make such commitments." (See page 983.) Any question of a declaration of war by the United States was considered to be quite out of the question.

Shadow of Capitulation

That Saturday evening the French Cabinet met for three hours at Bordeaux, under the presidency of M. Lebrun. In addition to the Ministers there were present General Weygand, Admiral Darlan, Commander-in-Chief of the French Navy, and General Vuillemin, Chief of the French Air Force. No report of their decisions was given out, but in well-informed circles there was little doubt that the French Government was contemplating making a separate peace. With this possibility in view and, if possible, to prevent it, the British Government issued an authoritative statement.

"At a time like the present it is natural that there should be baseless and ill-informed rumours of peace proposals and peace negotiations," it read. "It cannot be too clearly and definitely stated that Great



THE SMILES THAT SOON WORE OFF

Hitler and Mussolini met at Munich on June 18, 1940, to discuss armistice terms for France, and here they are seen smiling at the welcome given them by onlookers. The smiles were conjured up by thoughts of a speedy Axis victory in the war; smiles and thoughts alike soon vanished. Behind the dictators are Ciano and Ribbentrop.

Photo, Associated Press

Britain is firmly and resolutely determined to continue the struggle until victory has been won. Even if France's resistance on land were seriously weakened, she still has the most powerful Navy in Europe after the British Navy, and this great Allied fleet is fully capable of enforcing the blockade, which has become ever more effective as a result of Italy's entry into the war."

"Germany has used up her resources on a reckless scale," the statement went on, "although these reserves may not yet be exhausted. Unless she can defeat the British Empire and its Allies within a few months, her chance of defeating them at all will have vanished."

Stress was laid upon the tremendous resources of the British and French Empires, now supplemented by those coming from the United States; it was stated that in the preceding five weeks more men had been called up for military service in Great Britain than in any corresponding period in her history; the production of aeroplanes, arms and munitions was increasing at a great pace, and the supplies from America would soon be coming as fast as the ports could deal with them.

"Unlike the enemy," the statement concluded, "whose only hope of victory rests in defeating the Allies within a few weeks or months, we are prepared to continue the war just so long as it may be necessary to secure the downfall of our opponents, even though it may take years to accomplish that task. In their unshaken determination to achieve victory, no matter what the cost, the Government of the Empire have the united support of their people."

That Sunday, June 16, was France's day of vital decision. Three times the French Cabinet met, and throughout the day M. Reynaud was in communication with the British Government, sometimes through the Ambassador, Sir Ronald Campbell, sometimes over the telephone with General de Gaulle, who was in London on a military mission. In a message to Mr. Churchill, M. Reynaud revealed that the American response to his appeal was not considered satisfactory, and asked, therefore, for France's formal release from the obligation imposed by the Anglo-French Agreement. The British Cabinet was immediately convened, and a reply was sent whose general substance was communicated by Mr. Churchill to the House of Commons on June 25.

"Separate negotiations whether for armistice or peace," said the Premier, "depend upon an agreement made with the French Republic and not on any particular French administration or statesman. That, therefore, involved the honour of France. However—and this was in view of what one saw of all they had suffered and of what were the forces evidently working upon them—**provided that the French Fleet was dispatched to British ports and remained there while the negotiations were conducted, his Majesty's Government would give their consent to the French Government asking what terms of armistice would be open to them.**

It was also made clear that his Majesty's Government were resolved to continue the war and altogether cut themselves out of any association with such inquiries about an armistice.

'Declaration of Union'

At M. Reynaud's invitation Mr. Churchill got ready to repair immediately to Bordeaux. In the meantime the finishing touches were applied to a dramatic proposal which it was hoped would fortify France's spirit and induce her to continue the struggle at Britain's side. News of this proposal was telephoned by General de Gaulle from London to his chief in Bordeaux, and the General urged that no decisive steps should be taken until its terms had been ascertained.

The British proposals were communicated to the French Government in Bordeaux by Sir Ronald Campbell on June 16, and published in London on the following day. They took the form of a "Declaration of Union" which it was proposed the two Governments should immediately conclude. The Declaration (whose draft is given

in page 983) was one of "indissoluble union and unyielding resolution" in "common defence of justice and freedom, against subjection to a system which reduced mankind to a life of robots and slaves." No longer would France and Great Britain be two nations, but they would constitute one Franco-British Union with joint organs of defence, foreign, financial and economic policies. Every citizen of the one country would immediately enjoy full citizenship of the other; there would be a single War Cabinet, and all the forces of Britain and France would be placed under its direction. It would govern from wherever it best could,



and the two Parliaments would be formally associated. "The Union will concentrate its whole energy against the power of the enemy, no matter where the battle may be. And thus we shall conquer."

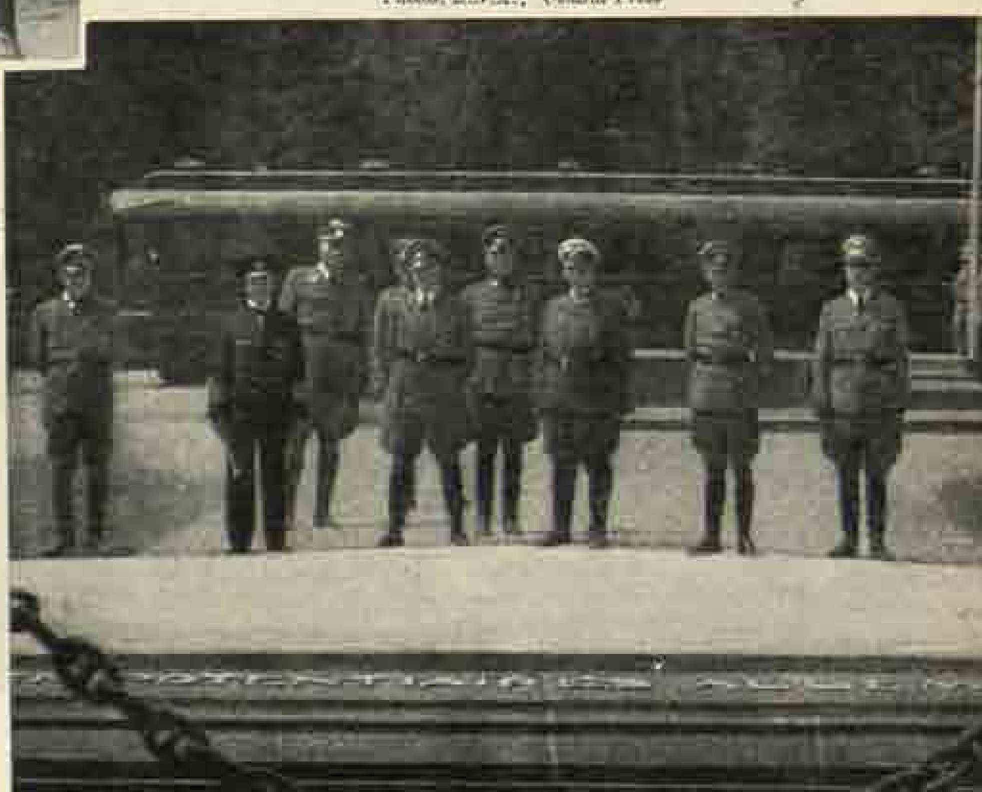
The terms of this offer were conveyed to the French Cabinet by M. Reynaud, who, if report speaks true, had been informed by the British Government that he might be appointed the first Prime Minister of the Franco-British Union. Its reception was mixed. Those who were in favour of carrying on the war, if necessary from outside France in the French Empire, welcomed it; others regarded the offer as in some way offensive to French national pride. Apparently they held the view that it was preferable for France to maintain her nominal independence even though she were disastrously defeated, rather than that in the hope, nay certainty, of eventual victory, she should merge her identity with her ally. Some have argued that if the offer had been made a little earlier it would have stood a better chance of acceptance. But it was turned down. According to one version, it was rejected by 14 to 10, although another account has it that no formal vote was taken upon it when the Cabinet reassembled for the third time at 10 p.m. Certain it is that the Ministers, who had just received a further report on the military situation from General Weygand, were asked to vote yes or no to the definite proposal that negotiations for an armistice should be opened up with the enemy, and the voting was 13 in favour and 11 against (another report says 14 to 10). Amongst those in favour of an armistice were Marshal Pétain and MM. Baudouin, Prouvost, Chautemps, Ybarnegaray and Frossard, Bouthillier and Chichery, with the sinister figure of ex-Premier Laval active in the background, while those in favour of a continuation of the struggle included MM. Reynaud, Mandel, Campinchi, Delbos, Monnet, Dautry, Marin, and Laurent-Eynac. M. Reynaud immediately resigned and President Lebrun forthwith invited Marshal Pétain to form a government. After a short consultation with the President the Marshal produced his list of Ministers, obviously prepared in advance; his Vice-Premier was



DRAPED WITH THE SWASTIKA

Nazi guards stand before the monument at Compiègne erected after the war of 1914–18 in memory of the soldiers of France. It infuriated the Nazis because it showed the German eagle transfixed by a French sword.

Photo, E.N.A.



TIME'S WHIRLIGIG

Hitler and his staff await the arrival of the French delegates on June 21, 1940, before Marshal Foch's famous coach in which the 1918 armistice was signed. Left to right: Ribbentrop, Admiral Raeder, Brückner, Hitler, General Keitel, Goering, General von Brauchitsch, and Hess. On the right is Hitler's personal standard. Above (left), Dr. Bell and Dr. Müller, the German signatories to the Treaty of Versailles, so often denounced by Hitler, seen at Cologne station on their way to Paris.

Photos, E.N.A.; Central Press





ROLES REVERSED

Above, Marshal Foch, with French and British delegates, is seen outside the railway coach at Compiègne where the Allied armistice with Germany was signed on November 11, 1918. Below, Hitler and his leaders are seen awaiting the arrival of the French delegates at the same spot on June 21, 1940, when it was France's turn to sue for peace.

Photos, Wide World; E.N.A.

M. Chautemps; M. Baudouin, Foreign Minister; General Colson, Minister of War; Admiral Darlan, Minister of the Navy and Merchant Marine; General Pujo, Minister of Air; and M. Ybarnegaray, the Basque leader, Minister of War Veterans and Families. At 10.30 M. Reynaud left the Cabinet room; at 11.30 it was announced over the wireless that he had resigned and Marshal Pétain was Premier in his stead; before midnight the aged Marshal had sent for the Spanish Ambassador, Señor Lequerica, and requested him to convey to Hitler the French Government's desire for an armistice.

When the news of M. Reynaud's fall was telephoned to London by Sir Ronald Campbell, Mr. Churchill was actually in the train, just about to set off for Bordeaux. He returned to Downing Street and arranged for the dispatch to the new French Government of a reminder that the condition on which the British Government had insisted in return for France's release from her promise had not been complied with—that the French Fleet should be sent to a British port. "There was plenty of time to do it," said Mr. Churchill on June 25; "it would have made no difference to the negotiations, and the terms could hardly have been more severe than they were. In order to reinforce the earnestness with which we held our views, we sent the First Sea Lord (Sir Dudley Pound) and the First Lord (Mr. Alexander), as well as Lord Lloyd, to establish what contacts were possible with the new Ministers."

On the morrow (Monday, June 17) Marshal Pétain told France over the wireless that "with a heavy heart I say we must cease to fight"; he had appealed to the enemy to ask whether he was ready to discuss with him "as between soldiers and in honour" the means of bringing hostilities to an end. On the same day M. Baudouin made his début as Foreign Minister in a broadcast from Bordeaux, in which he declared that, though France was ready to lay down her arms if an honourable peace could be obtained, she would refuse to accept shameful conditions which would mean the end of her people's spiritual freedom. "The enemy has not broken

our morale," he claimed; "he has achieved his end only by the crushing superiority of his effectives and material. Our troops faced the battle with their traditional valour. They could not replace the tanks, cannon and the 'planes destroyed by the enemy. The 40 million Frenchmen found themselves before the Battle of France almost alone against the 80 million Germans, reinforced by the menace of the Italian Army." That was why the French Government had been obliged to ask the enemy what his conditions would be for an armistice, although France had not, as yet, actually laid down her arms. Mr. Churchill, too, broadcast that evening: "The news from France is very bad and I grieve for the gallant French people," he said. "Nevertheless, we are sure that in the end all will be well." (*See* page 983.)

Meanwhile, the negotiations for an armistice were proceeding. Pétain's application had reached the Fuehrer, and at noon on June 18, the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, Hitler arrived in Munich, and three hours later Mussolini joined him there. From 4 p.m. until shortly after 8 the two Dictators were in conference at the Fuehrer House, and at the conclusion of their meeting it was baldly stated that they had agreed on their attitude towards the French request for an armistice. Then Mussolini went back to Rome and Hitler returned to his G.H.Q. And still the war went on; still all the French land, sea and air forces were instructed to continue their resistance until the terms of an honourable armistice could be announced.

Dictators Meet at Munich

Towards nightfall it was reported from Madrid that the decisions taken at Munich had been notified to the German Embassy there and were being passed on through Señor Lequerica and the Spanish Foreign Office to the French Government in Bordeaux. The terms were not published as yet, but no one doubted that they would be harsh. Meanwhile, in London Mr. Churchill, in the name of Britain, defied the Dictators; while General de Gaulle broadcast an impassioned appeal to his fellow-countrymen. "Has the last word been said?" he asked; "has all hope disappeared? Is the defeat final? No. Believe me, I speak with knowledge, and I tell you that France is not lost." Then he invited all French officers and men, French engineers and skilled workmen of the armament industries, who were on British soil or who might arrive there, to get in touch with him. "Whatever happens, the flame of French resistance must not and shall not be extinguished!"



GERMAN SIGNATORY

General Keitel, Chief of Staff of the German Army, is here seen signing the Franco-German armistice terms at Compiègne on behalf of his country.

Photo, E.N.A.

The German reply, reported to the French Cabinet on June 19, required the nomination of French plenipotentiaries to meet the representatives of the German Government at a place and time to be notified later. Still the terms of the armistice were not revealed, but there were many in Bordeaux who felt that they would be so humiliating that it would be impossible for a self-respecting France to accept them. Hence they renewed their plea that the Government should leave France for North Africa; a number of deputies, indeed, including MM. Daladier, Mandel, Delbos and Campinchi, actually went on board the "Massilia" in the Gironde, and two days later—with the connivance and, apparently, the active assistance of the French authorities—sailed for Africa, arriving at Casablanca about June 24. For this they were later arraigned as "deserters" and threatened with trial by the Vichy Government; when, on June 25, General Lord Gort and Mr. Duff Cooper endeavoured to contact them in Morocco, they were prevented from doing so. The arguments of the "die-hards" were supported in person by Mr. A. V. Alexander, Sir Dudley Pound, and Lord Lloyd, who renewed their offers of British warships and other vessels to help transport French troops and officials to Africa, and pressed that the French Fleet should be removed at once to British ports.



FRENCH SIGNATORY

General Huntziger, head of the French armistice delegation, signing the Franco-German armistice terms at Compiègne on June 22, 1940.

Photo, E.N.A.

The rot had gone too deep and too far, however. On the evening of June 19 the names of the French plenipotentiaries—General Huntziger, Rear-Admiral Maurice Leluc, General of the Air Force Bergeret and M. Noel, formerly Ambassador to Poland—were transmitted to Berlin via Madrid, and within a few hours Hitler's instructions were received concerning the place and time of the armistice meeting. The unhappy four left Bordeaux on the morning of June 20, and while they were on their way to Paris via Tours Marshal Pétain made another apologia over the wireless. He uttered the astonishing assertion that on the eve of the Battle of France the French Army was only 2,800,000 strong, and that in war material France was even more deficient than in effectives. Nevertheless, she would learn a lesson from the battle which had just been lost. "Stand by me," he concluded, "the fight still goes on. It is for France, the soil of her sons." (*See* page 990.) And still the German armies continued their advance, pouring into the central zone of France from west and north and east.

French Plenipotentiaries

Now the stage was set for the drama of the armistice. The scene was that same glade in the Forest of Compiègne where not quite 22 years before Marshal Foch had dictated the terms of surrender to a defeated and completely crushed Germany. The same railway coach was used, and the plenipotentiaries sat at the same table and on the same chairs





FRANCE ACCEPTS ITALY'S TERMS

After the armistice had been signed with Germany the French delegates left for Rome to conclude similar negotiations with Italy. Top left, the French delegation entering the Villa Incisa, near Rome, where the meeting was held. Above, Marshal Badoglio (standing) reading the Italian armistice terms. Facing the camera, left to right, M. Léon Noël, General Huntziger, General Parisot, General Bergeret. Right, new Franco-Italian frontier at Mentone denoted by a rope across the road. Beyond, looking in the direction of Nice, is still unoccupied France

Photos, Associated Press; E.N.A.



which had been in use at the historic meeting of November 11, 1918.

On the afternoon of June 21 a guard of honour composed of German troops was drawn up outside the coach, and immediately in front of the Armistice Memorial the personal standard of the Fuehrer was raised. Soon after 3 o'clock Hitler arrived and was greeted by Field-Marshal Goering; Col.-Gen. Keitel, Chief of Staff of the Army; Col.-Gen. von Brauchitsch, C.-in-C. of the Army; Grand Admiral Raeder; Herr von Ribbentrop and Rudolf Hess, Foreign Minister and Deputy Fuehrer respectively. The Germans entered the coach and a quarter of an hour later the French delegation made their appearance. Silently saluting Hitler's flag, they, too, entered the dining car. Hitler and his party rose on their entrance and gave the Nazi salute. Then all took their seats at the table, Hitler and Huntziger face to face, with their colleagues on either hand. The proceedings were opened by Keitel, who read the preamble to the armistice conditions.

"At the order of the Leader and Supreme Commander of the German Defence Forces," he began, "I have to make the following communication:

Trusting to the assurance given to the German Reich by the American President Wilson and confirmed by the Allied Powers, the German Defence Forces in November 1918 laid down their arms. Thus ended a war which the German people and its Government did not want, and in which in spite of vastly superior forces the enemy did not succeed in defeating the German Army, the German Navy or the German Air Force.

At the moment of the arrival of the German Armistice Commission there began the breach of the promise solemnly given. On November 11, 1918, there began in this very train a period of suffering for the German people.

Whatever could be done to a nation in the way of dishonour and humiliation in human and material suffering, began at this point. Broken promises and perjury were used against a nation which after over four years of heroic resistance had shown only one weakness—namely, that of believing the promises of democratic statesmen.

On September 3, 1939, twenty-five years after the outbreak of the World War, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany without any reason. Now the war has been decided by arms. France is defeated. The French Government has asked the German Government to make known the German conditions for an armistice.

If the historic Forest of Compiègne has been chosen for the handing over of these terms, this is done in order, by this act of atoning justice, to wipe out once and for all a memory which for France was not a glorious one in her history and which was felt by the German nation as the deepest shame of all times.

After a heroic resistance France has been defeated in a single bloody battle and has collapsed. Germany does not, therefore, intend to give the armistice negotiations with such a brave opponent a shameful character.

The purpose of the German demand is: (1) to prevent a resumption of the fight, and (2) to give Germany all safeguards for the continuation of the war against Great Britain which has been forced upon her, as well as to create the preliminaries for the construction of a new peace, the essential contents of which will be the restoration of the wrong done with violence to the German nation."

The reading concluded, everyone stood, and at 3.42 p.m. the Fuehrer and



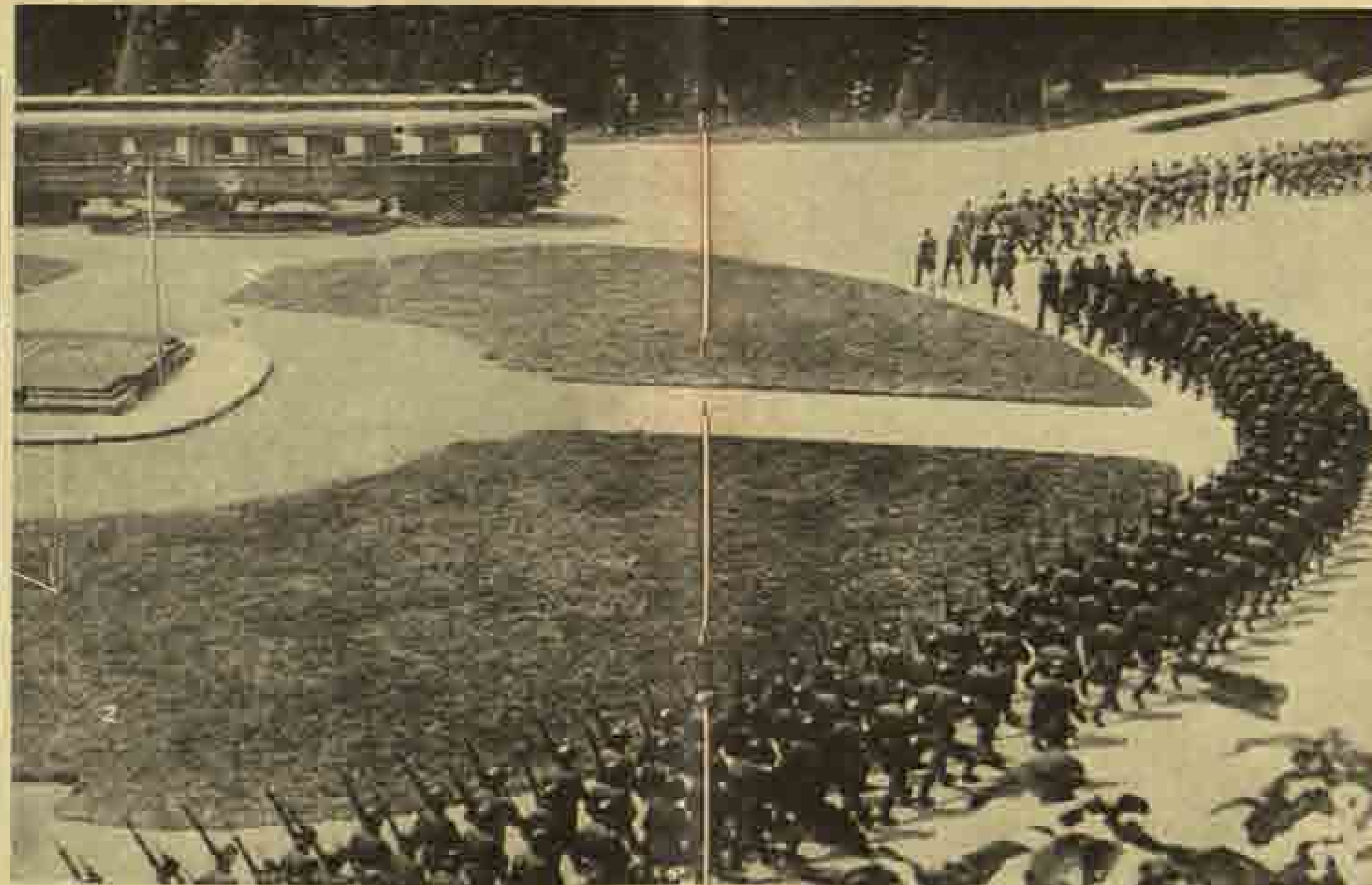
GUNS AND MEN GO HOME

As much material as possible was evacuated from Cherbourg before the Germans reached the town on June 18, 1940. Above, Bren guns and equipment are piled on the deck of a transport bound for England, while below weary soldiers are seen fast asleep on another part of the deck as the ship makes its way to a home port.

Photos, Ministry of Information In*



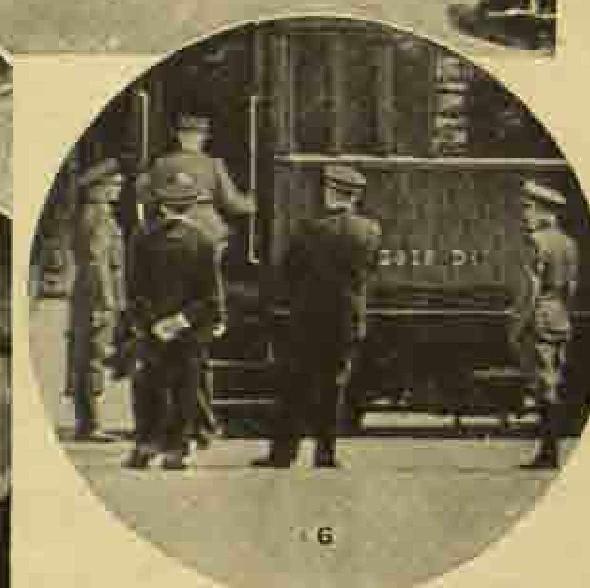












SCENE OF FRENCH TRIUMPH AND SHAME

The photographs in this page show the theatrical presentation of armistice terms to France in the same railway carriage in which the armistice of 1918 was signed. 1, the carriage being placed by German soldiers in the position it occupied near Compiègne in November, 1918; 2, a German guard of honour. 3, Hitler arrives. In the background the monument to the soldiers of France who fell in 1914-18 is seen draped with the swastika. 4, the French delegates arrive ; in front, General Huntziger,

FRANCE SUBMITS TO GERMAN MIGHT

behind are Vice-Admiral Le Luc (with portfolio) and General Bergeret, of the French Air Force. Following, in civilian clothes, M. Léon Noël. 5, reading the terms of the Armistice on June 21, 1940, inside the coach. Around the table from left to right are Admiral Raeder, Goering, Hitler, General Keitel (reading the terms), General von Brauchitsch, Rudolf Hess, General Huntziger and Vice-Admiral Le Luc. Ribbentrop has his back to the camera. 6, the French delegates entering the railway carriage.

Photos, Associated Press ; E.N.A. No. 5, drawn by Felix Gardon, after a German photograph



LITTER OF A VANQUISHED ARMY

This photograph, taken shortly after the Nazi occupation of Northern France, shows gas-masks, steel helmets, leggings, water-bottles, haversacks and countless other equipment thrown away along the roadside by the retreating French armies. Hundreds of miles of road were left in a similar condition. *Photo, K.N.A.*



ARMISTICE COMMISSION AT WORK

This historic photograph shows the Franco-German Armistice Commission in session in the Council Chamber at the Hotel Nassauer Hof, Wiesbaden. The Commission sat to work out details in connexion with German occupation of France under the armistice terms. The French delegates were headed by General Huntziger; the Germans by General Stülpnagel.

Photo, E.N.A.

his suite left the car to the strains of "Deutschland über Alles" and the Horst Wessel song. Then the French delegation retired to a tent placed near by for their accommodation and noted the terms of surrender. Their tenor was such that they had to telephone to Bordeaux, but at 6 o'clock they returned to the coach for a discussion with Keitel. The conversation continued into the next day, and again



DEMILITARIZED

The shaded portion in the map above shows the French zones in Algeria and Tunisia which were demilitarized under the terms of the Franco-Italian armistice signed on June 24, 1940.

there were consultations with Bordeaux, where the French Cabinet was in almost permanent session. But by now Keitel was getting impatient and at 6.30 p.m. he asked for a final answer within an hour. So at 6.50 (5.50 p.m. B.S.T.) on Saturday, June 22, the armistice was signed, by General Huntziger for France and General Keitel for Germany. (The terms are set out in page 1018.

Just before appending his signature Huntziger said:

"The French Government has agreed to the terms of the armistice, but before signing the document I wish to say a few personal words. At the moment when the French delegation puts its signatures to this document, being forced to agree to conditions through military misfortune, and having fought on the side of its ally, the delegation wishes to point out that France has the right to expect from Germany a peace which would secure good neighbourly relations with her great neighbour. As one soldier speaking to another, I hope that French soldiers will never have to regret that they laid down their arms for the peace to come."

To which Keitel briefly replied:

"I confirm the acceptance of the French Government in signing this armistice agreement. As a soldier I have little to say except that the victor knows how to honour a courageous, defeated foe." After the signatures had been actually appended, the German asked all the delegates to rise. "At this moment," he said, "it is our duty to remember these brave soldiers of our countries who have spilled their blood on the battlefields. We have risen to honour their memory."

But though the armistice was signed hostilities did not cease. The humiliation and torture of ravaged France were to be carried yet further. An announcement from Hitler's headquarters made it clear that arms would not be laid down until six hours after the Italian Government

Fighting Continues

had informed the German High Commission that an Italian-French armistice had been concluded. So without wasting a moment the French delegates proceeded by car and 'plane to Rome, where they arrived on the afternoon of June 23. They drove forthwith to the Villa Manzoni, some miles outside the city, and there the five Frenchmen—for they had now been joined by General Parisot, former French Military Attaché in Rome—opened discussions with the Italian officials. A little later they motored to the Villa Incisa, some miles farther from the capital, where the negotiations proper were conducted with the Italian plenipotentiaries, these being Count Ciano, Foreign Minister; Marshal Badoglio, Chief of the General Staff; Admiral Cavagnari, Chief of Naval Staff; General Pricolo, Chief of the Air Staff; and

Terms of Armistice Which Were Imposed Upon France by Germany and

EXTRACTS AND SUMMARIES OF THE GERMAN ARTICLES

Article 1. "The French Government directs a cessation of fighting against the German Reich in France as well as in French possessions, colonies, protectorate territories and mandates, as well as on the seas. It directs the immediate laying down of arms of French units already encircled by German troops."

Article 2. Provides that French territory north and west of the line shown on the map will be occupied by German troops. Those areas which are to be occupied and which are not yet in control of German troops shall be turned over to them immediately.

Article 3. "In the occupied parts of France the German Reich exercises all rights of an occupying Power. The French Government is itself to support with every means the regulations resulting from the exercise of these rights and to carry them out with the aid of the French administration. . . . It is the intention of the German Government to limit the occupation of the west coast, after ending hostilities with England, to the extent absolutely necessary. The French Government is permitted to select the seat of its government in unoccupied territory, or, if it wishes, to move to Paris. In this case, the German Government guarantees the French Government and its central authorities every necessary alleviation so that they will be in a position to conduct the administration of unoccupied territory from Paris."

Demobilization and Surrender of Material

Article 4. "French armed forces on land, on the sea and in the air are to be demobilized and disarmed in a period still to be set. Excepted are only those units which are necessary for maintenance of domestic order. Germany and Italy will fix their strength. The French armed forces in the territory to be occupied by Germany are to be hastily withdrawn into territory not to be occupied, and to be discharged. These troops, before marching out, shall lay down their weapons and materials at the places where they are stationed at the time this Treaty becomes effective."

Article 5. Provides that Germany may demand the surrender, in good condition, of all guns, tanks, 'planes, means of conveyance and ammunition of French units which are still resisting and which at the time this agreement becomes effective are in the territory not to be occupied.

Article 6. Provides that such of the above war material as are not allocated to French use are to be stored under German or Italian control. The manufacture of new war material in the unoccupied territory is to be stopped.

Article 7. Provides that land and coastal fortifications in the occupied territory are to be surrendered to the Germans undamaged, together with the plans of those fortifications.

Disposal of the French Fleet

Article 8. "The French war fleet is to collect in ports to be designated more particularly, and under German and (or) Italian control, there to be demobilized and laid up—with the exception of those units released to the French Government for protection of French interests in its colonial empire. The peacetime stations of ships should control the designation of ports.

"The German Government solemnly declares to the French Government that it does not intend to use the French war fleet which is in harbours under German control for its purposes in war, with the exception of units necessary for the purposes of guarding the coast and sweeping mines. It further solemnly and expressly declares that it does not intend to bring up any demands respecting the French war fleet at the conclusion of a peace.

"All warships outside France are to be recalled to France, with the exception of that portion of the French war fleet which shall be designated to represent French interests in the colonial empire."

Article 9. Provides that the Germans are to be given the exact location of all mines, and that they may require that French forces sweep them away.

Article 10. "The French Government will forbid any portions of its remaining armed forces to undertake hostilities against Germany in any manner.

"The French Government also will prevent members of its armed forces from leaving the country and prevent armaments of any sort, including ships, 'planes, etc., being taken to England or any other place abroad.

"The French Government will forbid French citizens to fight against Germany in the service of States with which the German Reich is still at war. French citizens who violate this provision are to be treated by German troops as insurgents."

Article 11. Provides that no French merchant shipping may leave port until further notice without the approval of the German and Italian Governments. French merchant vessels will either be recalled by the French Government or instructed to enter neutral ports.

Article 12. Provides that no aeroplane flights may be made over French territory without German approval. Airfields in the unoccupied territory shall be placed under German and Italian control.

Requirements in Occupied Territory

Article 13. Obliges the French Government to turn over to German troops in the occupied region all facilities and properties of the French armed forces, in undamaged condition; also harbours, industrial facilities and docks; also transportation and communication facilities. Further, the French Government shall perform all necessary labour to restore these facilities, and will see to it that the necessary technical personnel and rolling stock of the railways be retained in service, also other transportation equipment.

Article 14. Prohibits further transmission from all French wireless stations. Resumption of wireless communication from unoccupied France will require special permission.

Article 15. Obliges the French Government to convey transit freight between the German Reich and Italy through unoccupied territory.

Article 16. "The French Government, in agreement with the responsible German officials, will carry out the return of the population into occupied territory."

Article 17. Obliges the French Government to prevent transfers of economic valuables and provisions from the occupied to the non-occupied territory or abroad without German permission. "In that connexion, the German Government will consider the necessities of life of the population in unoccupied territory."

Article 18. "The French Government will bear the costs of maintenance of German occupation troops on French soil."

Prisoners and Prison Camps

Article 19. "All German war and civil prisoners in French custody, including those under arrest and convicted, who were seized and sentenced because of acts in favour of the Reich, shall be surrendered immediately to the German troops. The French Government is obliged to surrender upon demand all Germans designated by the German Government in France, as well as in the French possessions, colonies, protectorate territories and mandates. . . ."

Article 20. "French troops in German prison camps will remain prisoners of war until conclusion of a peace."

Article 21. Makes the French Government responsible for the security of all objects whose surrender is demanded in this agreement, and binds it to make compensation for any damage or removal contrary to the agreement.

Article 22. Gives the Armistice Commission, acting in accordance with the direction of the German High Command, authority to regulate and supervise the carrying out of the armistice agreement.

Article 23. Provides that this agreement becomes effective as soon as the French Government has also reached an agreement with the Italian Government. Hostilities will cease six hours after the Italian Government has notified the German Government of conclusion of such an agreement.

Article 24. "This agreement is valid until conclusion of a peace treaty. The German Government may terminate this agreement at any time with immediate effect if the French Government fails to fulfil the obligations it assumes under the agreement."

Italy and Signed at Compiègne on June 22 and at Rome on June 24, 1940

THE ITALIAN ARTICLES SUMMARIZED

Article 1. France will cease hostilities in metropolitan territory in French North Africa, in the colonies and in territories under French mandate. France will also cease hostilities in the air and on the sea.

Article 2. When the armistice comes into force and for the duration of the armistice the Italian troops will stand on the advanced lines in all theatres of operations.

Article 3. In French metropolitan territory, a zone situated between the lines referred to in Article 2 and a line drawn 50 kilometres (30 miles) as the crow flies beyond the Italian lines proper, shall be demilitarized for the duration of the armistice.

Demilitarization of Frontier Zones

In Tunis the militarized zone between the present Libyan-Tunisian frontier and the line drawn on the attached map shall be demilitarized for the duration of the armistice.

In Algeria and in French African territories south of Algeria which border on Libya a zone 200 kilometres wide (about 120 miles) adjoining the Libyan frontier shall be demilitarized for the duration of the armistice.

For the duration of hostilities between Italy and the British Empire and for the duration of the armistice the French Somaliland coast shall be entirely demilitarized.

Italy shall have full and constant right to use the port of Jibuti (French Somaliland) with all its equipment, together with the French section of the Jibuti-Addis Ababa railway, for all kinds of transport.

Article 4. The zones to be demilitarized shall be evacuated by French troops within 10 days after the cessation of hostilities except only for the personnel strictly necessary for the supervision and maintenance of fortification works, barracks, arms depots and military buildings, and the troops required to maintain order in the interior as shall be determined later by the Italian Armistice Commission.

Article 5. Under full reserve of right mentioned in Article 10 which follows, all arms, supplies and ammunition in the zones to be demilitarized in French metropolitan territory and territory adjoining Libya, together with the arms surrendered to the troops effecting the evacuation of the territories concerned, must be removed within 15 days.

Fortifications to be Dismantled

Fixed armaments in fortification works and the accompanying ammunition must, in the period, be rendered useless.

In the coastal territory of French Somaliland all movable arms and ammunition, together with those to be given up to the troops effecting the evacuation of the territory, shall be laid down within 15 days in places to be indicated by the Italian Armistice Commission.

In the case of fixed armaments and ammunition in fortification works in the above territory the same procedure shall be followed as for French metropolitan territory and territory adjoining Libya.

Article 6. Declares that so long as hostilities continue between Italy and the British Empire, the maritime military fortified areas and naval bases of Toulon, Bizerta, Ajaccio and Oran shall be demilitarized until the cessation of hostilities against the above-named Empire.

Articles 7 and 8. Concern the procedure of demilitarizing the maritime military fortified areas and naval bases.

Article 9. Prescribes that all armed land, sea and air forces in Metropolitan France shall be demobilized and disarmed within a specified period to be fixed later, except such formations as are necessary to maintain internal order. The strength and armament of such formations will be determined by Italy and Germany.

Article 10. Declares that Italy reserves the right, as a guarantee of the execution of the Armistice Convention, to demand the surrender in whole or in part of the collective arms of the infantry and artillery, armoured cars, tanks, motor vehicles and horse vehicles, together with ammunition belonging to units who have been engaged or have been facing Italian forces.

These arms and materials must be surrendered in the state in which they are at the time of the armistice.

Article 11. Concerned with Italian or German control of arms, munitions and war materials in non-occupied French territories and the immediate cessation of the production of war material in the same territories.

Article 12. Prescribes that units of the French Fleet shall be concentrated in ports to be indicated and demobilized and disarmed under the control of Italy and Germany, except for such units as the Italian and German Governments shall agree upon for the safeguard of French colonial territories.

All warships not in French metropolitan waters except those which shall be recognized as necessary to safeguard French colonial interests shall be brought back to metropolitan ports.

The Italian Government declares that it does not intend to use, in the present war, units of the French Fleet placed under its control and that on the conclusion of peace it does not intend to lay claim to the French Fleet.

For the duration of the armistice the Italian Government may ask French ships to sweep mines.

Article 13. Provides that the French authorities shall render harmless within 10 days all mines in the maritime military areas and naval bases which are to be demilitarized.

Article 14. Declares that the French Government, in addition to the obligation not to carry on hostilities in any form anywhere against Italy, undertakes to prevent members of its armed forces and French citizens generally from leaving national territory to take part in hostilities against Italy.

Ships to Stay in Port

Article 15. Prescribes that the French Government shall undertake to prevent warships, aeroplanes, arms, war material and munitions of every kind belonging to France, or in French territory or in territories controlled by France, from being sent to territories belonging to the British Empire or to other foreign States.

Article 16. Forbids all French merchant ships to leave port until such time as the German and Italian Governments permit a partial or total resumption of French commercial maritime activities.

French cargo boats not in French ports or in ports under French control at the time of the armistice shall be either recalled to such ports or directed to neutral ports.

Article 17. Concerns the restoration of Italian cargo boats together with their cargoes as well as Italian merchandise or merchandise consigned to Italy which has been seized from non-Italian ships.

Article 18. Bans the departure of any aeroplane from French territory or territories under French control and places under Italian or German control all air ports together with their equipment in the same territories.

Control of Wireless Transmission

Article 19. States that, until the Italian and German Governments shall have decided otherwise, all wireless transmission from French metropolitan territory generally is prohibited.

Article 20. Lays down that goods shall be freely transported between Germany and Italy through non-occupied French territories.

Article 21. Declares that all Italian prisoners of war and Italian civilians who have been interned, or arrested and sentenced for political reasons, crimes, or on account of the war, shall be handed over to the Italian Government.

Article 22. Provides that the French Government shall guarantee the good preservation of all material that it has or may have to deliver up under the terms of the Armistice.

Articles 23 and 24. Concern the Italian Armistice Commission entrusted with the execution of the Convention and French delegation to act as liaison between the Government and French authorities and the Commission itself.

Article 25. Concerns the procedure for the enforcement of the armistice.

Article 26. Lays down that the Convention shall remain in force until the conclusion of a peace treaty, but may be denounced by Italy at any time in the event of the French Government not fulfilling its undertakings.

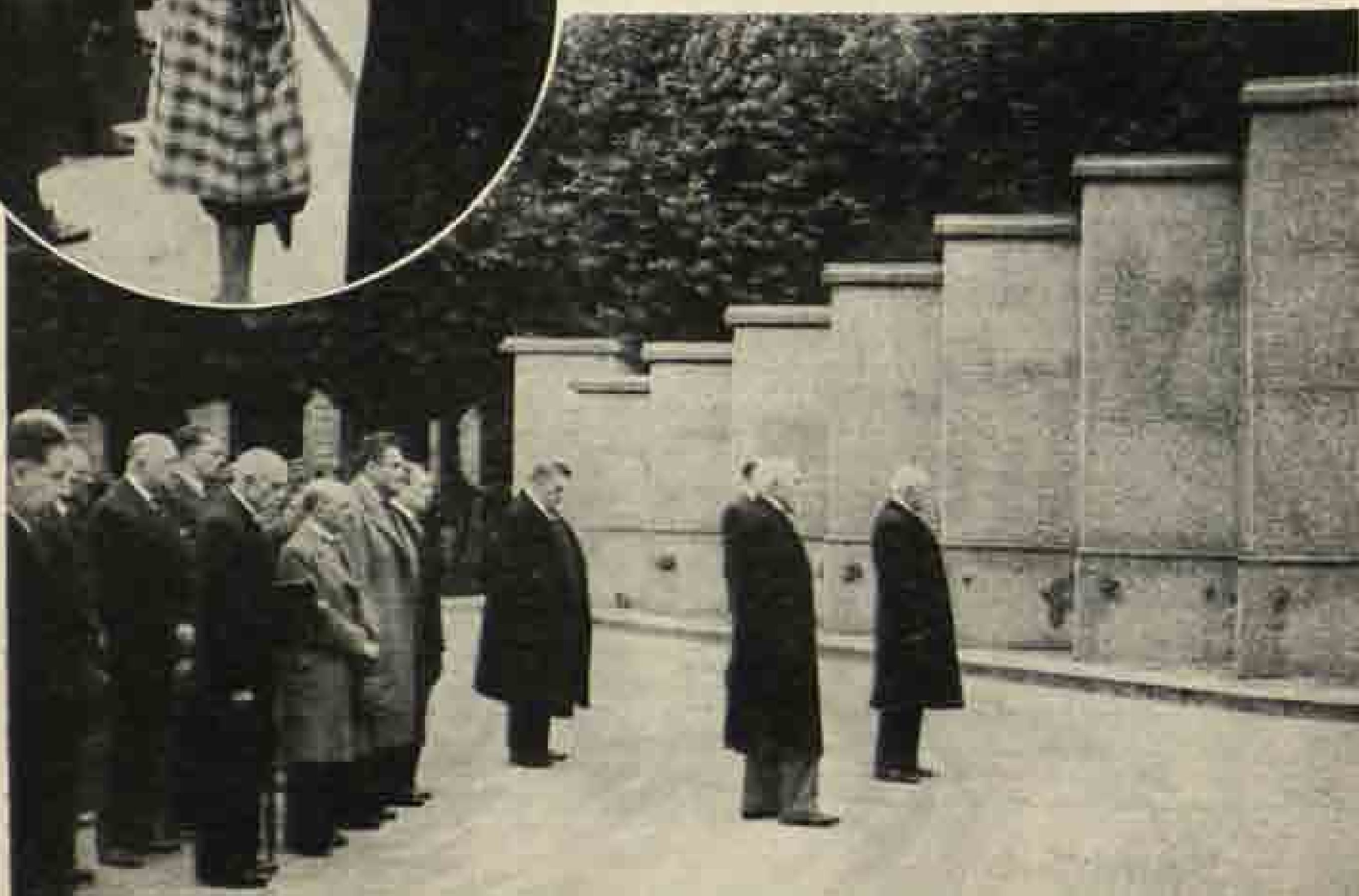


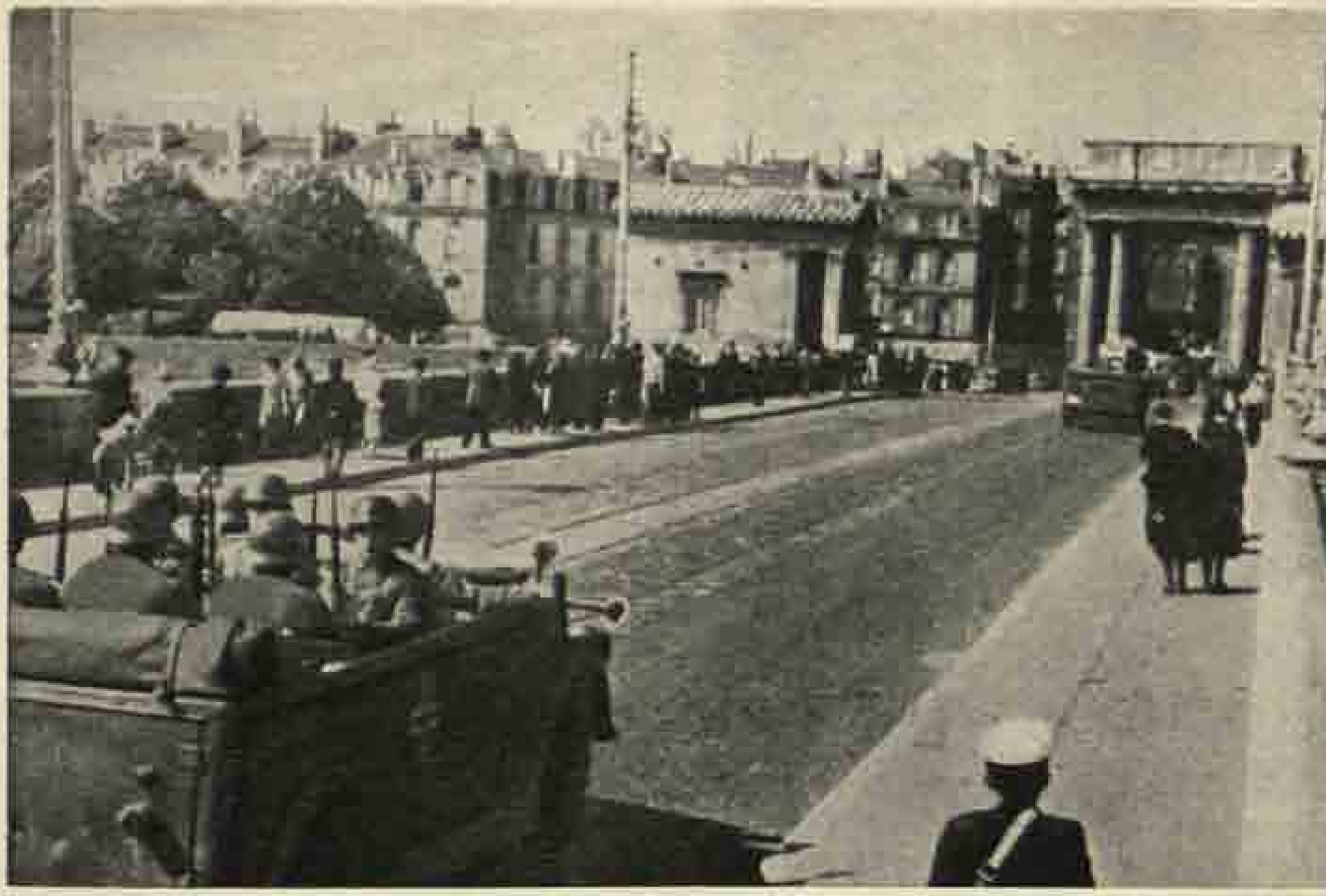


DARK HOURS OF FRANCE'S DESTINY

After France had accepted the armistice terms imposed upon her by Germany in June, 1940, a memorial service to the French dead was held in the Cathedral at Bordeaux, which M. Lebrun, the French President, is seen leaving (above). Then the members of the Government observed a two-minute silence in front of the Bordeaux 1914–18 war memorial as shown below. In front stands Marshal Pétain. Left, Frenchwomen weep in sorrowful memory of their dead.

Photos, Keystone





General Roatta. At Marshal Badoglio's request General Roatta read out the armistice conditions, which were duly noted by General Huntziger. Then, returning to the Villa Manzoni, the French delegates discussed the terms between themselves and also over the telephone with their colleagues at Bordeaux. The next day, June 24, the discussions were resumed at the Villa Incisa, and there, at 7.15 p.m., the Franco-Italian Armistice was signed by General Huntziger (for France) and Marshal Badoglio (for Italy).

The armistice terms are printed in page 1019. Shortly afterwards Rome broadcast the statement that "the Italian Government have notified the French Government that the signing of the armistice convention between Italy and France was communicated to the German Government this afternoon at 7.35 p.m., Italian Summer Time. As a consequence, hostilities between Italy and France will cease at 1.35 a.m., Italian Summer Time, tomorrow morning, June 25, 1940, year XVIII of the Fascist Era."

At 9 o'clock the same evening a special communiqué was issued in Berlin. "Today, Monday, June 24, at 7.15 p.m., the Treaty of Armistice was signed between Italy and France. The Reich Government were informed at 7.35. The Treaty of Armistice between Germany and France has therefore entered into force. The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces has ordered the cessation of hostilities against France at 1.35 a.m. on June 25. The war in the West is therefore ended."

WHERE THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT TOOK REFUGE

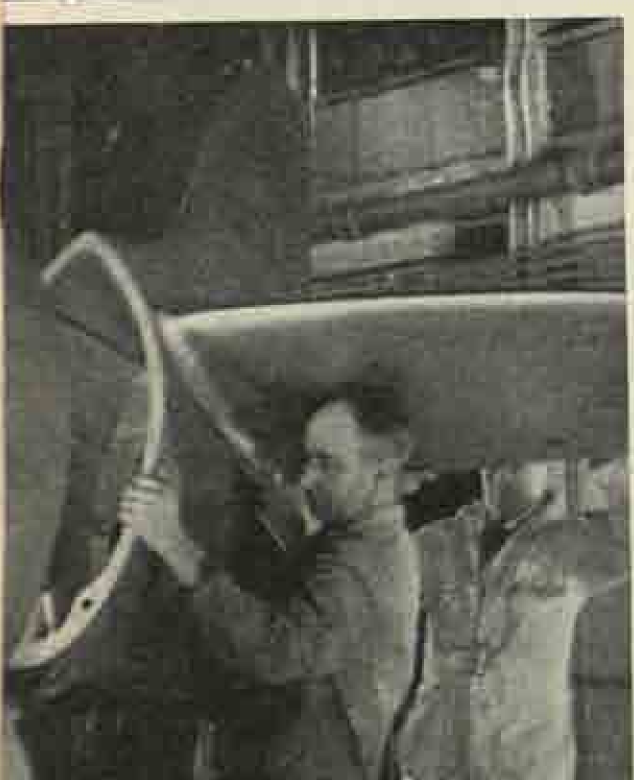
Nazi troops entered Bordeaux, which had been for a few days the seat of the French Government, on June 27-28, *1940*. Above, some of them are seen crossing a bridge over the Garonne. After the conclusion of the armistice with Germany the Pétain Government set up its headquarters at the Pavillon de Sévigne, Vichy (below), in the unoccupied portion of France.

Photos, Wide World; E.N.A.











IN THE INDUSTRIAL 'FRONT LINE'

One of the first achievements of the Churchill Government was the launching of a great drive to speed up the output of war material. Here are scenes typical of this sustained and successful effort. 1, stacking a small part of one day's output of anti-aircraft shells; 2, mechanics fitting the track on a cruiser tank; 3, aircraft workers fixing the tail on to a Spitfire; 4, a propeller shaft being mounted on a new British merchant ship on the stocks.

Photos from the Ministry of Information film: "Behind the Guns"

THE HOME FRONT: WAR EFFORT INTENSIFIES UNDER MR. CHURCHILL'S GOVERNMENT

Repercussions of the Norwegian Set-back—Invasion of the Low Countries—Chamberlain Resigns and Churchill Forms a Government—New Men for New Measures—The Home Guard—Speed-up in Armaments and Munitions—New Government's Mastery of the Situation—Emergency Powers (Defence) Act—Problems of War Finance—The Aliens Question—Treachery Bill

The storm that had been gathering on the Home Front for six months broke at the beginning of May, 1940. Press criticism had been constant and anxious; it had long been apparent that the directors of British war policy, military, political, diplomatic and economic, had failed to secure a firm grip of the situation or to concentrate the fullest energies of the people and the armed forces on the task of winning the war. The cry of "appeasement" was still heard in many quarters, and the elimination of incompetence and slow-wittedness was constantly—and with reason—demanded by public and press. To this clamour Mr. Neville Chamberlain's Government remained obstinately deaf. Speech after speech demonstrated the determination of its ministers to do little effective to increase effort or intensify activity. Popular discontent grew apace.

A final demonstration of "lack of grip" was provided by the Government's attitude towards, and action to counter, Hitler's invasion of Norway. From the beginning things went ill with the mixed Allied expeditionary force, and the climax came with the decision to evacuate Norway and leave its inhabitants to the mercy of the invaders. A full dress debate on this subject was demanded in the House of Commons, and it opened on May 7. It was evident that Mr. Chamberlain was disturbed but not contrite, and when Opposition speakers—and not a few of his own Party—pointed out the full meaning of the calamity, showed how unprepared and ill-equipped the expedition had been, and "demanded heads," he was unable to produce any convincing refutation of their claims. Perhaps the most bitter attack was made by Mr. L. S. Amery, a Conservative, who quoted at the conclusion of his telling speech the words of Cromwell: "You have sat too long here for any good you are doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go." When a division was challenged Mr. Chamberlain made a tactical error of the first magnitude. "I have friends in the House," he said. "At least we shall see who is with us and who is against us. I call upon my friends to support us in the lobby tonight." By thus introducing the element of Party into what had been a free debate, the Prime Minister sealed his doom. Resenting his attitude, a number of prominent Conservatives voted against the Government, and, although in the division the Government gained a majority of 81 (281 votes against 200), it was very evident that some radical reconstruction of the Front Bench would have to take place. Among the thirty-three Conservatives who voted against the Government were Mr. Amery, Mr. Boothby, Mr. Duff Cooper, Mr. Richard Law (son of Bonar Law), and Mr. Harold Macmillan (who had earlier distinguished himself by exposing the hollowness of Mr. Chamberlain's pretence at helping the Finns), and two important Service experts in Brig.-Gen. Spears and Sir Roger Keyes. Mr. Harold Nicolson (Nat. Lab.) was another opponent. These names have been detailed with a purpose; in the new Government that was to be formed all of those mentioned, with the exception of Gen. Spears and Sir Roger Keyes, were given office.

Evacuation of Norway



NATION'S NEW LEADER

Following severe criticism of the Government on May 7-8, 1940, Mr. Neville Chamberlain resigned the office of Premier and was succeeded by Mr. Winston Churchill, seen above leaving No. 10, Downing Street

The debate ended on May 8. On May 10, in the morning, the Labour Party's Parliamentary Executive Committee issued a statement of Labour's readiness to take part in "a new Government, under a new Prime Minister." At dawn of the same day Hitler had invaded Luxemburg, Holland and Belgium. At 6 p.m. Mr. Chamberlain handed his resignation to the King, who immediately called upon Mr. Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, to form a new Government. That evening at 9 p.m. Mr. Chamberlain broadcast to the nation the news of his resignation and urged full support for Mr. Churchill; later that night the appointment of a War Cabinet of five was announced. This comprised the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill; Mr. Chamberlain (Lord President of the Council); Mr. C. R. Attlee, leader of the Labour Party (Lord Privy Seal); Lord Halifax, who retained the Foreign Secretaryship; and Mr. Greenwood, Labour's deputy-leader (Minister without Portfolio). New appointments to the defence departments were also announced: Mr. Anthony Eden became Minister for War; Mr. A. V. Alexander (Labour), First Lord of the Admiralty; and Sir Archibald Sinclair (Liberal leader), Secretary for Air.

Labour Ready to Cooperate

The remainder of the Cabinet appointments were announced during the next few days. Sir John Simon became



AIR MINISTER

The Rt. Hon. Sir Archibald Sinclair was appointed Minister of Air in May, 1940. He had been chosen leader of the Liberals in the House of Commons in 1935.
Photo, P.N.A.

Lord Chancellor with a Viscounty, his place as Chancellor of the Exchequer being taken by Sir Kingsley Wood. Other important appointments included Mr. Herbert Morrison (Labour) as Minister of Supply; Mr. Duff Cooper as Minister of Information; Mr. L. S. Amery as Secretary for India; Mr. Ernest Bevin (chief of the T.U.C.) as Minister of Labour; and Lord Beaverbrook as Minister of Aircraft Production. Morrison, Bevin and Beaverbrook were destined to be the "key" men in the new drive for greater war production, and to infuse an entirely new spirit into the workers.

Overtopping all was the impressive figure of Mr. Churchill, the only man capable of redeeming the nation from the state of doubt and depression into which it had to all appearance nearly fallen. With these leaders the war on the Home Front entered a new phase, coinciding with the opening up of the military front by Germany's



FIRST LORD

The Rt. Hon. Albert V. Alexander was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty in May, 1940. He had held similar office from 1929 to 1931.
Photo, Planet News



WAR OFFICE CHIEFS

General Sir John Dill, left, was appointed Chief of the Imperial General Staff in May, 1940. He is seen accompanying Mr. Anthony Eden, who became Secretary of State for War in Mr. Churchill's Cabinet.
Photo, Planet News



MINISTER OF INFORMATION

The Rt. Hon. A. Duff Cooper was appointed Minister of Information in 1940. He served in the war of 1914-18, winning the D.S.O.
Photo, Vandyk

attack on the Low Countries. The keynote and slogan of the new Government was provided by the Minister of Supply, who coined the phrase that rang round the country: "Go to it!" Mr. Churchill's immortal oratory provided a grimmer slogan. "I would say to the House," he said at the next meeting of Parliament on May 13, "as I said to those who have joined this Government: 'I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.'" Joyously and grimly the nation and the Government adopted these two dicta as the mottoes of the time. England had awakened at last.

Nine months of tardiness had to be made up. At once the whole pitch of the nation's effort altered. An intense speeding up of war production in the factories was equalled by brilliant improvisation in the realm of home defence against invasion and against tactics (e.g. the use of parachute troops) which had gone far to give success to



INDIAN SECRETARY

The Rt. Hon. L. S. Amery was appointed Secretary of State for India in May, 1940. He was Secretary for Dominion Affairs, 1925-29.
Photo, Lafayette

the Germans in Holland. Britain at bay was a wonderful sight.

Within a week of the formation of the new Government all potentially dangerous aliens were interned, a new Treachery Bill was introduced, and the formation of the "Local Defence Volunteers" (a little later re-named "Home Guard") was announced. The last, Britain's reply to threats of invasion by air and sea, was to include men between 17 and 65 not otherwise engaged in military service, who were invited to volunteer for armed service in their own home districts. Almost before Mr. Eden had ended his broadcast announcement of the formation of the L.D.V. thousands of men were besieging the recruiting offices. Within a day a quarter of a million applications had been received—eloquent testimony to the new spirit of the country. This spirit was well summarized by Mr. Churchill in his first broadcast to the nation as Prime Minister, on May 19, when, as his conclusion, he quoted: "Arm yourselves, and be ye men of valour, and be in readiness for the conflict, for it is better for us to perish in battle than to look on the outrage of our nation and our altars." In the next few months Mr. Churchill's national broadcasts became beacon-lights to the people. In moments of over-confidence he applied the sober note of judgement; in days of depression he gave confidence and hope. The nation will never know how much it owed to the Prime Minister in its darkest hours. To chronicle in detail the events of



PREACHER OF THRIFT

Sir Robert Kindersley, President of the National Savings Committee, led Britain's War Savings Campaign. He had served on the Dawes Committee in 1924, and was also a Director of the Bank of England



MINISTER OF SUPPLY

One of the most popular appointments to Mr. Churchill's Cabinet was that of Mr. Herbert Morrison as Minister of Supply. He is here seen standing by his poster which urged the workers to the utmost war speed.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

the period as they affected the enormous increase of war effort and production in the factories would require volumes. Great sacrifices were borne by workers and employers alike. Mr. Bevin's titanic figure became a symbol of the unshakable confidence of the Government in the common people, and of the trust of the people in the Government. Unemployment decreased, new training centres for potential arms workers were opened, transference of labour to parts of the country where it was lacking was undertaken on a large scale, difficulties of Trade Union regulations were overcome, and an entirely new drive and urgency were infused into the factories by the forcefulness of his personality. Similarly, Lord Beaverbrook, at the new Ministry of Aircraft Production, used his energy and tact to multiply output without sacrificing quality or efficiency. Lord Nuffield, who had till now stood outside the arena, was brought into it by Lord Beaverbrook's own efforts, and the Nuffield Aircraft Factory and Vickers Supermarine organization were amalgamated under one control. "24 hours a day" was the order for aircraft workers. They "went to it" with a will.

As the situation worsened on the Continental battlefield, so it improved on the Home Front. It was a race against time. With the collapse of Gamelin and the appointment of Weygand in his place, Britain began to perceive that she might be left alone and without effective allies to combat the strongest power in Europe. But as every day brought worse news from France and Flanders, so it brought better news from the factories. "More shells—more tanks—more guns," said Mr. Herbert Morrison, broadcasting an appeal for "work at war speed" on May 22. "Here is our assurance of victory—but we must create it." Mr. Bevin's Labour Supply Board, formed on May 27, was soon at work, with its area committees finding the skilled labour which the war factories were demanding. Mr. Morrison's impetus to the salvage campaign produced an immediate increase in results—the value of waste material salved had risen from £336,000 per annum at the beginning of the campaign to £1,380,000 per annum by the end of May. Mr. R. H. Hudson, at the Ministry of Agriculture, introduced far-reaching reforms that demonstrated in this sphere the general forcefulness and "grip" of the new men in power. Lord Woolton, the new Minister of Food, brought fresh ideas and stimulation to an essential department that had progressed haltingly under his predecessor, Mr. W. S. Morrison. The Savings Campaign went on at a satisfactory speed under Sir Robert Kindersley.

Every day brought new evidence of the Government's mastery of the situation. No longer did the nation feel that it was being allowed to slide towards defeat. Even the curtailment of



TO SPEED THE PLOUGH

The Rt. Hon. Robert Hudson was appointed Minister of Agriculture in May, 1940. Unionist Member for Southport, Mr. Hudson had held high posts in the Civil Service and was at one time Minister of Pensions.

Photo, Fox





BEAVERBROOK GETS GOING

Lord Beaverbrook was appointed Minister for Aircraft Production in Mr. Churchill's Cabinet in May, 1940. He at once got to work with characteristic drive, and his urgent appeal to aircraft workers to give up their Sunday rest met with ready response. Above, workers on a Sunday shift are seen outside a Lancashire factory.

Photos, "Daily Mirror"; Criterion Press

individual liberties was accepted as a symbol of the growing strength of the country. For months the people had been longing for action. Now that it was being taken, and forced upon them, they were for the first time content.

As witness to this popular feeling there can be instanced the reception accorded to an Act of Parliament which virtually placed the country on a totalitarian basis. This was the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1940, introduced by Mr. Attlee as Deputy-Leader of the House and passed through all its stages on May 22. In effect, the Act gave the Government power to take complete control of all persons and property in the country; it was the most far-reaching and, in a sense, "unconstitutional" act of a markedly unconventional Government.

But, far from crying out against this theoretical loss of their liberties, far from seeing in it the hand of tyranny, the people welcomed the Act with the greatest possible warmth. It was the final test both of the nation's character and of the unbounded confidence enjoyed by the Government. In the Commons there was hardly a word said against the Act; it was read a second time without a division, passed through Committee without amendment, read a third time, passed in all its stages by the House of Lords, and received the Royal assent—all in one day. Thus did Britain give herself to war.

While this sudden bound in production and expenditure was taking place, the financial problems of the war were being tackled by the Treasury in a confident, if less unconventional, way. The new issues of loans and bonds enumerated in a previous Chapter proceeded satisfactorily, and the commandeering of privately owned American securities and their realization to pay for our enormous purchases in the United States were intensified. The Excess Profits Tax was raised to 100 per cent. The rising cost of living was followed by some wage-increases, a sign of inflation which no attempt was made to prevent; but it also brought about a decline in private consumption—essential if the financial structure of the State was to remain firm. Rationing became more strict; the sugar ration was reduced from 12 oz. to 8 oz. on May 27, the butter ration from 8 oz. to 4 oz. on June 3, and the bacon ration from 8 oz. to 4 oz. on June 10.

A Curb on Profiteering

Regulations were introduced to curb profiteering; on June 10 a list of articles, including clothing, hardware, and household goods of all kinds from perambulators to matches, was published as having become controlled in price. A further effort to prevent inflation was made in the Limitation of Dividends Bill, but this provoked so much criticism that it was dropped.



HOME GUARD IN TRAINING

To meet the threat of invasion a new force for Home Defence was created in May, 1940. Known at first as the Local Defence Volunteers and later as the Home Guard, it was made up of volunteers between the ages of 17 and 65. Our photographs show: above, some of Chipping Campden's Home Guard; right, L.C.C. park-keepers in training; below left, one of the first uniformed volunteers on duty; below right, Home Guards at Bisley.

Photos, "Daily Mirror"; "News Chronicle"; Fox; L.N.A.







The "conscription of wealth," demanded when conscription of man power was introduced, did not take place. There was no capital levy, for the Government seemed convinced that the country must live out of income and not encroach on capital beyond what was absolutely necessary. Some realization of the effect of rising prices on poor persons with fixed incomes was shown, and pensions of all kinds were increased during June, the Old Age Pension, for example, being increased from 10s. to 19s. 6d. for certain classes of pensioners.

But there was little sign of any drastic financial policy to equal in effect the vigorous new drive in war production. True, both imports and exports showed an increase in the figures published during the month of June, but the exports, although at the highest level since July, 1930, were still insufficient to pay for the war material bought from abroad. For instance, it was announced on May 21 that the Allied purchasing commission in America were preparing to spend sixteen thousand million dollars for war materials in that country, in addition to the one thousand million dollars already spent! The general appearance of the financial situation was, in fact, the least exhilarating of all the aspects of the war. The appointment of Sir Kingsley Wood as Chancellor of the Exchequer was much criticized, and it was generally felt that an entirely new and unorthodox approach to the problem was required.

Financing the War Effort

The conventional methods of dealing with national finance, however, prevailed. They comprised limitations and restrictions on the consumption of certain luxury or semi-necessary goods, on the one hand, with small financial grants to those particularly hard pressed by war conditions on the other. Thus, in addition to the increase in old age and other pensions, there were to be small grants, varying from £10 to £50, to persons with incomes less than £400 per annum whose houses and possessions were damaged by "war activities." The Treasury was attempting, in other words, to carry on the financing of the war on "business as usual" lines, and showed a startling lack of imagination in its work.

A further issue of securities was made on June 21; these were $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent National War Bonds, to an unlimited amount. Though launched with optimism, the new bonds, which were to be repayable on July 1, 1947, met with a disappointing reception. Those with small savings were satisfied with the same rate of interest ($2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent) on their Post Office Savings Bank accounts, while to the larger investor this was to be a "three per cent war." The Chancellor's appeal on June 19 for interest-free loans met with a better response, but it was generally believed that a more comprehensive and forceful financial programme was required if inflation were to be avoided.

New War Bonds

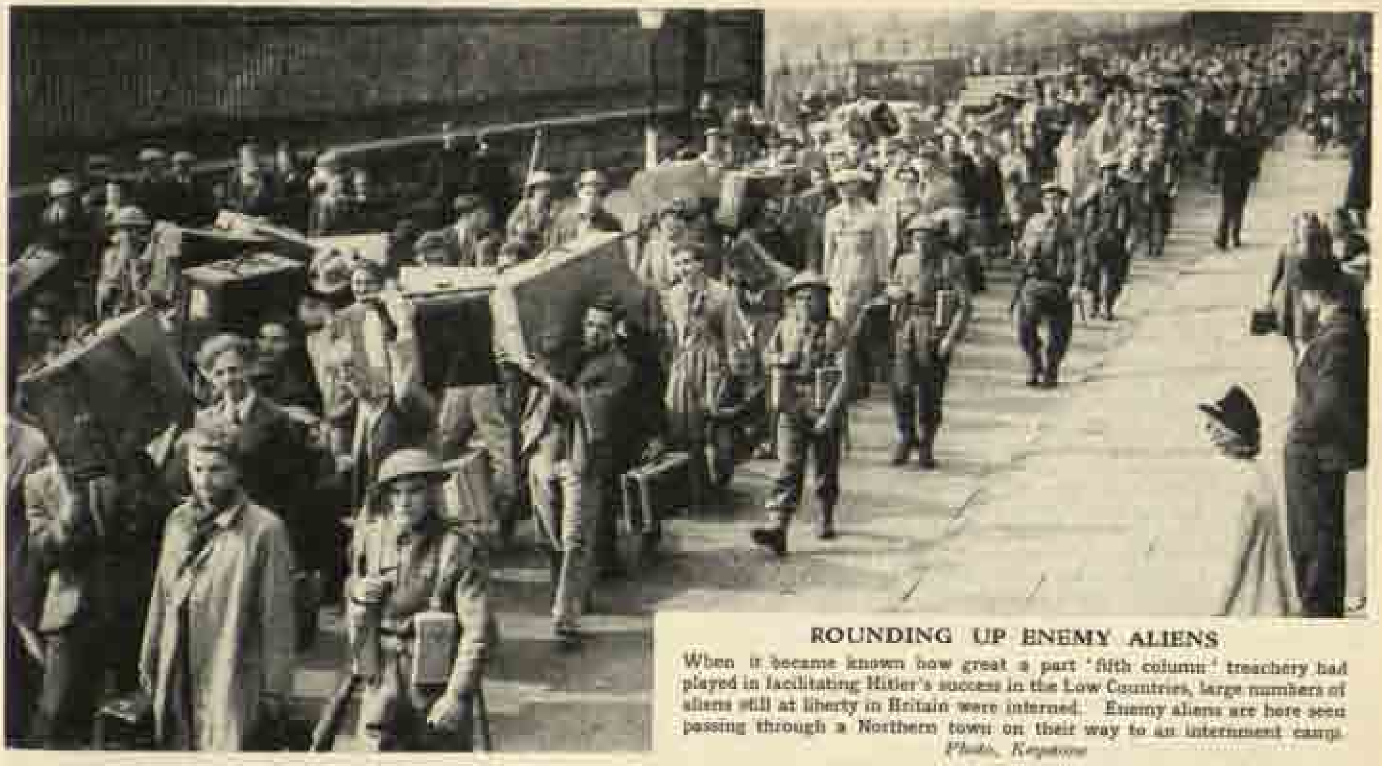
Newspaper criticism was not restricted to the financial question. The firm measures which had taken the country by storm when disaster threatened were found to be mixed blessings a month later. With the evacuation of Dunkirk accomplished and our Army for the most part safe, there was time to examine more closely some of the Acts that had been rushed through Parliament in the dark days of May. Most prominent among criticized actions was the wholesale internment of aliens

DISCUSSING PROBLEMS OF SUPPLY

A new Labour Supply Board was set up by Mr. Churchill's Government in May, 1940, to mobilize the nation's man-power behind the industrial war effort. This photograph, taken at the Board's first meeting, shows, from left to right, Sir Thomas Phillips, Maj.-Gen. K. C. Appleyard, Mr. F. W. Leggett, the Rt. Hon. Ernest Bevin (Chairman), Mr. R. Coppock, Mr. A. P. Young, Mr. R. Assheton, and, standing on right, Mr. F. N. Tribe.

Photo, Central Press





ROUNDING UP ENEMY ALIENS

When it became known how great a part 'fifth column' treachery had played in facilitating Hitler's success in the Low Countries, large numbers of aliens still at liberty in Britain were interned. Enemy aliens are here seen passing through a Northern town on their way to an internment camp.

Photo, Keystone

that had been so widely urged in early May, when, with the example of Holland before them, the British people had for the first time taken fright at the spectre of "fifth column" activities. On calmer consideration it was now realized that thousands of anti-Nazi German and Austrian refugees, as well as smaller numbers of harmless nationals of our Allies—Czechs, Norwegians, Dutch and French—had been hastily clapped into internment camps. Efforts to get wrongfully interned aliens released were, however, in vain. Distinguished authors and scientists—and, even more in numbers, harmless persecuted citizens of no particular fame—languished in camps where the conditions, it was revealed, were far from good. From widespread criticism of their sufferings there grew a strong public outcry, which led still further to a reconsideration of the whole war aims of Britain.

If Britain was indeed fighting for the freedom of others, how could she justify her action in interning—and in such conditions—men who were her spiritual allies? Such was the fundamental question posed by the popular press day after day, morning, noon and night; and soon it was echoed by all the more enlightened newspapers. A spiritual unease was apparent in the Home Front, and for once the hold which the Government had on the confidence and affection of the electorate was weakened. So much progress on material lines—so many more aeroplanes, shells and guns—so many less unemployed; yet, on the other side of the medal, so much ignorance, racial prejudice, confused thinking, and bureaucratic somnolence.



SCRAP FROM ROYAL PARKS

A great drive was made to secure all available scrap iron for the munitions industry, and above railings are being collected from St. James's Park, London. Railings from all the Royal Parks were devoted to this purpose.

Photo, Fox

The exhilaration of May began to evaporate in the afterthoughts of June. The downfall of France—due to treachery and treachery only—was a warning against over-confidence. An intensification of the "fifth column" hunt took place, directed this time not against Jews and Socialists who had fled to England from Hitler's terror, but against the enemy within the gates. Sir Oswald Mosley, "fuehrer" of the British Union of Fascists, and Captain A. H. Ramsay, M.P., whose activities had for some time been suspect, were arrested. Strict regulations forbade the exportation of such Communist publications as "The Daily Worker," "The Week," and "Russia To-day." The Treachery Bill made its appearance once more.

Thus the end of June saw a recrudescence of the suspicion and criticism prevalent during the first four months of 1940, which had only been dispelled by the resignation of Mr. Chamberlain and the accession of Mr. Churchill. How this cloud in turn was dispelled is told in a later Chapter.

Historic Documents. CLV

'CONQUER WE MUST—CONQUER WE SHALL'

Mr. Churchill gave his first broadcast as head of the Government on May 19, 1940, at a moment when Germany, having overrun Holland and Belgium, was pouring her massed mechanized armies into France through a break in the Allied lines. The gravity of the situation found the Prime Minister as courageous and clear-sighted as ever, an inspiration and a goad to the people from whom he asked "the last ounce and the last inch of effort."

I speak to you for the first time as Prime Minister in a solemn hour for the life of our country, of our Empire, of our Allies, and, above all, of the cause of freedom. A tremendous battle is raging in France and Flanders. The Germans, by a remarkable combination of air bombing and heavily armoured tanks, have broken through the French defence north of the Maginot Line, and strong columns of their armoured vehicles are ravaging the open country, which for the first day or two was without defenders. They have penetrated deeply and spread alarm and confusion in their track. Behind them are now pouring infantry in lorries, and behind them again large masses are moving forward. Re-groupment of the French armies, to make head against and to strike at this intruding wedge, has been proceeding for several days, largely assisted by the magnificent efforts of the Royal Air Force.

We must not allow ourselves to be intimidated by the presence of these vehicles in unexpected places behind our lines. If they are behind our front, the French are also at many points fighting actively behind theirs.

If the French army and our own are well handled, as I believe they will be, if the French retain their genius for recovery and counter-attack, for which they have so long been famous, and if the British Army shows the dogged endurance and solid fighting power of which there have been so many examples in the past, then a sudden transformation of the scene might spring into being.

It would be foolish, however, to disguise the gravity of the hour. It would be still more foolish to lose heart and courage or to suppose that well-trained, well-equipped armies numbering three or four millions of men can be overcome in the space of a few weeks, or even months, by a scoop or raid by mechanized vehicles, however formidable.

We may look with confidence to the stabilization of the front in France and to the general engagement of the masses which will enable the qualities of French and British soldiers to be matched squarely against those of their adversaries.

Order of the Day: Furious Unrelenting Assault

For myself I have invincible confidence in the French Army and its leaders. Only a very small part of that splendid Army has yet been heavily engaged, and only a very small part of France has yet been invaded. There is good evidence to show that practically the whole of the mechanized and specialized forces of the enemy have already been thrown into the battle, and we know that very heavy losses have been inflicted on them.

No officer or man, no brigade or division which grapples at close quarters with the enemy, wherever encountered, can fail to make a worthy contribution to the general result. The armies must cast away the idea of resisting attack behind concrete lines or natural obstacles, and must realize that mastery can only be regained by furious unrelenting assault. And this spirit must not only animate the High Command, but must inspire every fighting man.

In the air, often at serious odds, even at odds hitherto thought overwhelming, we have been clawing down three or four to one of our enemies, and the relative balance of the British and German air forces is now considerably more favourable to us than at the beginning of the battle.

In cutting down the German bombers we are fighting our own battle, as well as that of France. My confidence in our ability to fight it out to the finish with the German air force has been strengthened by the fierce encounters which have taken place and are taking place. At the same time our heavy bombers are striking nightly at the tap root of German mechanized power, and have already inflicted serious damage on the oil refineries on which the Nazi effort to dominate the world directly depends.

We must expect that as soon as stability is reached on the Western Front the bulk of that hideous apparatus of aggression which dashed Holland into ruin and slavery in a few days will be turned on us. I am sure I speak for all when I say we are ready to face it, to endure it, and to retaliate against it to any extent that the unwritten laws of war permit.

There will be many men and women in this island who, when the ordeal comes on them, as come it will, will feel a comfort, and even a pride, that they are sharing the peril of our lads at the front—soldiers, sailors and airmen, God bless them—and are drawing away from them a part at least of the onslaught they have to bear.

Is not this the appointed time for all to make the utmost exertions in their power? If the battle is to be won, we must provide our men with ever-increasing quantities of the weapons and the ammunition they need. We must have, and we must have quickly, more tanks, more aeroplanes, more shells, and more guns. There is an imperious need for these vital munitions. They increase our strength against the powerfully armed enemy; they replace the wastage of the obstinate struggle; and the knowledge that wastage will speedily be replaced enables us to draw more readily on our reserves and throw them in now when everything means so much.

Battle of Britain That Lies Ahead

Our task is not only to win the battle but to win the war. After this battle in France abates its force there will come a battle for this island, for all that Britain is and all that Britain means. That will be the struggle. In that supreme emergency we shall not hesitate to take every step, even the most drastic, to call forth from our people the last ounce of effort of which they are capable. The interests of property and the hours of labour are nothing compared with the struggle for life and honour and freedom to which we have vowed ourselves.

I have received from the Chiefs of the French Republic, and in particular from its indomitable Prime Minister, M. Reynaud, the most sacred pledges that, whatever happens, they will fight to the end, be it bitter or be it glorious. Nay, if we fight to the end it can only be glorious.

Having received his Majesty's commission, I have formed an Administration of every party, and almost every point of view. We have differed and quarrelled in the past, but now one bond unites us all—to wage war until victory is won and never to surrender ourselves to servitude and shame, whatever the cost and whatever the agony may be.

If this is one of the most awe-striking periods in the history of France and Britain, it is also beyond doubt the most sublime. Side by side, unaided except by their kith and kin in the great Dominions and the wide Empires which rest beneath their shield, the British and French have advanced to rescue not only Europe, but mankind, from the foulest and most soul-destroying tyranny that has ever darkened and stained the pages of history. Behind them, behind us, behind the Armies and Fleets of Britain and France gather a group of shattered States and bludgeoned races—the Czechs, the Poles, the Norwegians, the Danes, the Dutch, the Belgians—on all of whom the long night of barbarism will descend unbroken even by a star of hope unless we conquer, as conquer we must, as conquer we shall.

Today is Trinity Sunday. Centuries ago words were written to be a call and a spur to faithful servants of truth and justice:

"Arm yourselves, and be ye men of valour, and be in readiness for the conflict, for it is better for us to perish in battle than to look on the outrage of our nation and our altars. As the will of God is in Heaven, even so let Him do."

Diary of the War

JUNE, 1940

June 1, 1940. Evacuation from Dunkirk proceeding. R.A.F. shoot down 78 enemy machines over beaches. German 'planes bomb Marseilles, Lyons and other towns in Rhône Valley.

June 2. Mr. Eden announces that more than four-fifths of B.E.F. have arrived safely in England. Further German bombing raids in Rhône valley.

June 3. Withdrawal from Dunkirk and neighbouring beaches continues under fierce bombardment. Three destroyers reported lost off France: "Basilisk," "Keith," and "Havant." Enemy make first raid on Paris; over 1,000 bombs dropped. 25 raiders destroyed.

June 4. Evacuation from Dunkirk completed at 7 a.m. R.A.F. and French bombers make reprisal raids on Munich, Frankfort and Ruhr and Rhineland munition works. Enemy bomb Le Havre.

June 5. At dawn Germans launch new offensive along Somme and Aisne. Battle becomes intense in regions of Amiens, Péronne and Ailette Canal. Allied air forces make extensive night raids into Germany. Oil storage tanks fired at Frankfort and Mannheim.

June 6. German attack continues at all points between coast and Chemin des Dames. S.W. of Lower Somme German units infiltrate as far as R. Bresle. Allied air forces continue destruction of Rhineland railway system and factories and carry out attacks over Somme front.

June 7. Battle along Rivers Bresle, Somme and Aisne continues with great violence. Main thrust made north and east of Soissons, where Germans cross Ailette Canal. Enemy attack below Péronne and attempt to cross Aisne at Attigny. R.A.F. heavy bombers attack oil refineries, aerodromes, etc., in South Belgium and N.W. Germany.

June 8. Germans launch new attack on 80-mile front between Aumale and Noyon. Tank column penetrates French defences and reaches Forges-les-Eaux. R.A.F. continue day and night battering of enemy objectives and communications. French naval 'planes bomb factories near Berlin. H.M.S. "Carinthia" reported sunk by U-boat.

June 9. German armoured units reach outskirts of Rouen and Pont de l'Arche. Attack launched in Champagne between Château Porcien and Le Chesne. Pressure resumed near Soissons. Heavy raids round Paris.

June 10. Italy declares war on Allies. German pressure increases in Amiens-Rouen sector. In Soissons sector enemy attack southwards to River Ourcq and eastwards to Fismes. In Champagne armoured divisions reach R. Retourne. In Argonne battle rages with intensity. R.A.F. bomb munition dumps in Ardennes, industrial targets in Ruhr, and enemy lines and communications. Announced that Allied troops have been withdrawn from Norway. King Haakon and members of Norwegian Government arrive in London. Following ships are presumed lost: aircraft carrier "Glorious," destroyers "Acasta" and "Ardent," transport "Orama" and tanker "Oil Pioneer."

June 11. Germans cross Seine between Rouen and Vernon. Farther east French withdraw to positions south of Marne. In Champagne enemy cross R. Retourne. R.A.F. make fierce attacks on lines of communication, especially important crossings of R. Meuse. Other forces raid aerodromes in Libya and Italian East Africa. S. African Air Force bomb Moyale, Abyssinia. British naval and air units attack Tobruk.

June 12. South of Seine enemy pressure directed towards Evreux and Pacy-sur-Eure. On Lower Oise fighting in region of Persan-Beaumont. Germans attack new positions south of Marne and cross river near Château-Thierry. Great battle for Reims in progress. R.A.F. attack Turin, Genoa and other towns in North Italy. Other forces attack objectives in Abyssinia and Eritrea.

June 13. Enemy attack with violence south of Rouen and armoured columns pour over three Seine bridgeheads. Twelve divisions attack between Senlis and Metz. Other divisions cross Marne from Château-Thierry to Dormans; still others east of Reims advance towards Châlons-sur-Marne. Montmédy captured. Part of British division captured at St. Valery-en-Caux; remainder evacuated. H.M.S. "Scotstoun" sunk.

June 14. German forces enter Paris. Enemy make violent frontal assault on Maginot Line. In Champagne they reach Romilly and St. Dizier. Among other targets, R.A.F. bomb Channel ports. French 'planes fire oil tanks near Venice. British troops capture Fort Capuzzo.

June 15. French armies continue withdrawal south of Paris. Enemy cross Seine in Romilly area. Germans claim to have captured town, citadel and two forts of Verdun, and to have pierced Maginot Line near Saarbruecken. H.M. cruiser "Calypso" reported sunk by Italian submarine in Mediterranean.

June 16. Germans cross Seine near Melun and Fontainebleau. Armoured columns reach region north of Dijon and cross Saône above Gray. Reynaud Cabinet resign; Marshal Pétain forms new Government. Admiralty announce destruction of four Italian submarines.

June 17. Marshal Pétain announces that fighting must cease and that he has sued for peace. Violent fighting at Orléans. Germans enter Dijon. They claim that fortress of Metz has surrendered. R.A.F. heavily bomb targets in Rhineland and Ruhr. Massawa, Eritrea, raided.

June 18. Hitler and Mussolini meet at Munich to discuss French request for peace. Germans reach Cherbourg and Rennes. They claim to have captured fortress of Belfort and that Maginot Line has been penetrated to Rhine-Marne Canal. During night 100 enemy bombers raid E. and S.E. coasts. Seven shot down.

June 19. French Government appoint delegates to receive Germany's terms. Germans claim to have captured Strasbourg, Lunéville and fortress of Toul. Over 100 Nazi bombers cross British coasts at night. Three shot down and others damaged. R.A.F. attack enemy aerodromes at Amiens and Rouen and raid Ruhr and W. Germany. Air battle over Buqbuq, Egypt. Italian submarine sunk by R.A.F. British liner "Niagara" mined.

June 20. Germans occupy Lyons and capture Brest. Fighting in Maginot Line near Thionville. R.A.F. attack aerodromes at Rouen and Schiphol. Raids made on Libyan and Abyssinian frontiers. H.M.S. "Andania" reported sunk by U-boat.

June 21. Fighting continues, particularly in Vosges. Fleet Air Arm wreck gun position near Calais. Coastal Command attack shipping and oil depot at Willemsoord. R.A.F. raid Tobruk.

June 22. French delegation sign armistice with Germany at Compiègne. Germans occupy St. Malo and Lorient. Mass raids by R.A.F. on Essen, Bremen, Kassel, etc. Alexandria suffers first bombing raid.

June 23. French troops still holding out in parts of Maginot Line. Gen. de Gaulle announces formation of French National Committee. R.A.F. bomb Hamburg. Malta suffers 30th raid.

June 24. Armistice between France and Italy signed at Rome. Enemy occupies Angoulême and Aix-les-Bains. Mentone occupied by Italians. R.A.F. continue raids in N.W. Germany and in Libya. Liner "Wellington Star" reported sunk.

June 25. Cease Fire order sounds at 12.35 a.m. Enemy aircraft drop bombs in Midlands. Five shot down.

June 26. R.A.F. make daylight raids into Germany. At night seaplane bases at Texel and Hobler and many aerodromes are attacked. Other forces attack aerodromes at Gura, Macaaca and Assab.

June 27. Russia presents 24-hour ultimatum to Rumania requiring cession of Bessarabia and N. Bukovina. R.A.F. bomb oil refineries at Hanover and Bremen. Night raiders over Britain.

June 28. Rumania cedes Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to Russia. Channel Islands, which had been partly evacuated, bombed by enemy planes. R.A.F. bomb petrol dumps at Macaaca, Eritrea. Announced that submarine "Tetrarch" has sunk German transport off Norway. Marshal Balbo, Gov.-Gen. of Libya, reported killed.

June 29. Italian destroyer reported sunk in Mediterranean and two submarines in East Indies. R.A.F. bomb Willemsoord, chemical factory at Frankfort, and Dortmund-Ems Canal.

June 30. Armistice Commission opens at Wiesbaden. R.A.F. continue raids on aerodromes and on targets in N.W. Germany. Submarine "Grampus" presumed lost. Night raids over Britain.

GERMAN ARMY LEADERS IN BATTLE OF FRANCE

The great enemy offensive began on June 5, 1940, and continued until France, after suing for an armistice on June 17, had accepted both dictators' terms. Hostilities ceased on June 25, 1940.

Photos, Wide World ; Planet News ; Keystone



Gen. von Bock attacked over the lower Somme and the Oise-Aisne canal (June 5).



Gen. von Brauchitsch commanded three corps in the crucial offensive of June 5, 1940.



Gen. von Witzleben's army broke through the N.E. part of the Maginot Line (June 14).



Gen. Keitel, German chief of staff, signed the armistice for Germany on June 22.



Gen. Dollmann, whose army pierced the Upper Rhine works near Colmar (June 15).



The armoured divisions along the Meuse were commanded by Gen. Guderian (above).

Chapter 100

INSIDE GERMANY: REACTIONS TO THE SPRING OFFENSIVE OF 1940

Economic Position of Germany in the Spring of 1940—A Cheap and Satisfying Victory in the West—Food Shortage Continues, Despite the Sack of the Low Countries—Nazi Propaganda for 'Saving Starving Europe'—The Burden of Taxation Increases—A Stillborn Peace Offensive: Hitler's 'Last Appeal to Reason'—Battle of Britain Begins

In spite of a winter spent in enduring the stimulating activities of Goebbels' propaganda machine, the German people did not face the certain prospect of a spring offensive with any enthusiasm. Since the quick victory over Poland there had been none of the resounding successes which they had been promised, and the Finnish War had shown that, though victorious in this instance, the Russian war machine of which they had been taught to think so highly was a rusty and ramshackle contrivance in which little faith might be placed in an emergency. The winter had, moreover, been a time of great trial for the strictly-rationed people; the extreme cold—a record for 45 years—had made life without adequate food or fuel almost unbearable.



AN EXAMPLE WE DID NOT FOLLOW

While Britain severely limited her flag days the Nazis allowed these occasions to become wearisome in their profusion. Here are two papier-mâché "flags" brought back from Germany by a neutral business man. The cross was for a wounded soldiers' fund; the soldier's head was sold for the Winter Help Fund.

Photo, courtesy "Evening Standard"

By contrast, the Germans saw the tremendous and uninterrupted progress made by the Allies, and in particular Great Britain, in increasing their preparations for a long and bitter war, and they felt at every turn the pinch of need occasioned by the British blockade. The Balkans were solidly neutral; Italy was only "non-belligerent"; the Scandinavian countries were by no means benevolently disposed; and the West, with the exception of Spain, was wholeheartedly hostile.

In view of unrest among the people, therefore, it had become a political necessity to order a spring offensive. When Goering replied in a public speech on April 3 to Mr. Chamberlain's threat to tighten the British blockade, he announced that the blow which the Nazis would make in the spring would fall in the West. "It is in the West that the decisive blow must be struck," he said, "and for this the Fuehrer has mobilized all our resources." From this moment a tremendous intensification of high-pressure propaganda was put into operation. There was to be, the Germans were informed, a series of lightning victories that would end the war by midsummer; Russia's economic assistance was going to assume colossal dimensions; the whole of Europe was destined to form the Lebensraum of the Reich, for whose subjects the defeated races of the whole Continent would toil. This propaganda apparently had its effect; grumbling, ca'canny working methods and a few open riots had been reported, but now no more was heard of such things. Instead, there appeared in neutral newspapers a picture of a united Reich eagerly awaiting the signal to vent its fury on the ancient enemies—Britain and France.

A Cheap Conquest

After such preparation the people of Germany may well have been dismayed when the mountain brought forth a mouse; instead of a full-scale and terrible attack on the Maginot Line there was a political promenade into the peaceable country of Norway. The success was pleasing, especially since this was a victory in the old Hitlerian tradition—that is to say, a victory won almost without bloodshed, like those that had brought Austria and Czechoslovakia into the Reich. But the more thoughtful perceived that this was no way to break the British blockade or to disintegrate the solid hostility of the West. While the Norway episode brought Britain to her senses and had enormous and unpredictable effects on her policy, it had remarkably slight consequences in Germany. To Britain Norway was a defeat; to Germany it was not a victory. It solved no problems, it produced no easing of the blockade; all it provided was the possibility of getting iron-ore more easily next winter.



TRAGIC REMINDERS OF THEIR BITTER FATE

There is grim tragedy in these postage stamps issued in the "General-Government" of Poland by the German authorities. Designed by Polish artists in happier times, and symbolizing the past greatness and recent aspirations of the unhappy Poles, they had been over-printed with the eagle and swastika emblem.

Photo, Wide World



AS THE DIVE-BOMBER SAW IT

Here is a photograph from German sources showing bombs bursting on a French column during the retreat of June, 1940. Dive-bombing by the deadly "Stukas"—from the word Sturzkampfflugzeug, meaning dive-fighter aircraft—played an important part in crushing the French resistance.
Photo, Wide World

Thus Goebbels' propaganda recoiled upon itself, and a period of unease followed among the German people. As a result of the seizure of Norway the rations were no larger, the shortage of labour in the war industries was no less, the prospects of inflation were not reduced. The last became a particular anxiety about this time, and for a while Europe beheld the prospect of the people of the "unshakably confident Reich" buying baths, vacuum cleaners, geysers, furniture—anything tangible that was still purchasable—in vast quantities, so low had their confidence in their own currency fallen.

Necessities were still strictly rationed, and luxuries were practically unobtainable. For instance, cucumbers were retailed at 3s. each; women's blouses at £3 each; and real coffee at £1 per lb. —to take a few of the rarer commodities. Coupled with these restrictions there occurred during and after the Norwegian campaign an intensification of terrorism against grumbling workers and, particularly, the unfortunate non-Aryans. Certainly Norway relieved no problem.

Another blow at the West was, therefore, necessary. It had been expected on several occasions previously—when the Siegfried Line or, as the Germans call it, the "Westwall," had been extended along the Belgian and Dutch frontier; when a million and a half of troops had, months ago, been massed behind that wall. The pretext given for the invasion of Holland and Belgium was simple: these small Powers had lent themselves to a Franco-British plot with the purpose of invading the Ruhr Valley, Germany's industrial heart. Whether the German population as a whole swallowed that argument (first brought forward in Hitler's message to the troops at the start of the invasion) was irrelevant; after the docile acceptance of the excuses given for the rape of Denmark and Norway its masters did not bother over such trifles. Even so, the argument was an astonishingly weak one; had not both Belgium and Holland striven, with a consistency bordering on self-sacrifice, for the strictest neutrality! Had not King Leopold, after giving up the guarantees furnished by the Versailles and Locarno Treaties, obtained Hitler's special and most formal assurance of Belgium's inviolability! Both countries were to pay dearly for the delusion that they could retain neutrality in this struggle for the very foundations of human society. For on May 10 Hitler's great blow fell—first on Holland, Luxemburg and Belgium, then on the British and French in France.

For once the Germans seemed to be getting what they had been promised—a series of lightning victories, vast quantities of plunder in the most acceptable form of food, and the prospect of a sudden end to the war with the Reich supreme. As the Battle of Belgium became the "Battle of the Bulge," which developed into the "Battle of the Gap" and degenerated into the forlorn struggle for the Channel Ports—as the capture of Brussels followed that of Antwerp and of Sedan that of Brussels, and Dunkirk ended the whole unfortunate story—the joy in Germany knew no bounds. This was victory—"kolossal," cheap and satisfying. A more sober note was introduced by General von Reichenau's interview with American journalists at his headquarters on the Western front, when he admitted that the British Expeditionary Force was fighting with unexampled heroism and fury and paid an enemy's tribute to their qualities, adding a word of caution that the battle was by no means won yet. But this was soon forgotten in the welter of victories and the onsweep of the unconquerable Panzerdivisionen.

Even so, the Nazi propaganda machine did not overlook certain requirements for the benefit of future historians: it dug up after the event—as the Germans had done in 1915, when they ransacked the Belgian archives—the necessary proofs for the alleged conspiracy to invade the Ruhr via the Low Countries.

A Faked 'Conspiracy'

The Dutch Government, even when aware of the imminent German menace, had neglected to secure Allied help for the emergency, but had deposited with their Ministers in Paris, London, Brussels, and even in Berlin, sealed letters to be opened after a flagrant violation of their neutrality and their territory should have taken place. These sealed documents, containing an appeal for immediate succour, were found by the invader, and brought forward as documentary proof of an existing secret agreement directed against Germany. As such, properly cut, arranged and dated, they were embodied in a German White Book. It was in the days after France's defeat had been sealed, when—at least in Germany—Poland, Denmark, Norway and the Low Countries had been forgotten in the frenzied enthusiasm created by the victory over the "Erbfeind," the hereditary enemy.

Joy knew no bounds, therefore, when the French Government fled from Paris to Tours, from Tours to Bordeaux, and from Bordeaux to Vichy. France was the prime enemy, and French pride was humbled low for a generation. Hitler's proclamation of June 5 sounded the keynote for the celebrations: "The greatest battle of all times has been victoriously ended by our soldiers. . . . I therefore order flags to be flown throughout Germany for eight days."

The remainder of the campaign in France passed at lightning speed.



WAR HAS NO REVERENCE

This photograph, received in London towards the end of October, 1940, shows the havoc wrought by the Nazis in the historic town of Amiens, from the Cathedral of which the photograph was taken. The Germans entered Amiens, which had suffered in the war of 1914-18, on May 21, 1940.

Photo, E.N.A.



WAR PASSES ON BUT WRECKAGE REMAINS

This was one of the first photographs of Dunkirk to reach Britain after the French capitulation. Although several months had passed since Dunkirk was the scene of the ever-memorable evacuation of the B.E.F., debris of houses and wreckage of war material still littered the French port, as typified in this photograph of one of the newest streets of Dunkirk.

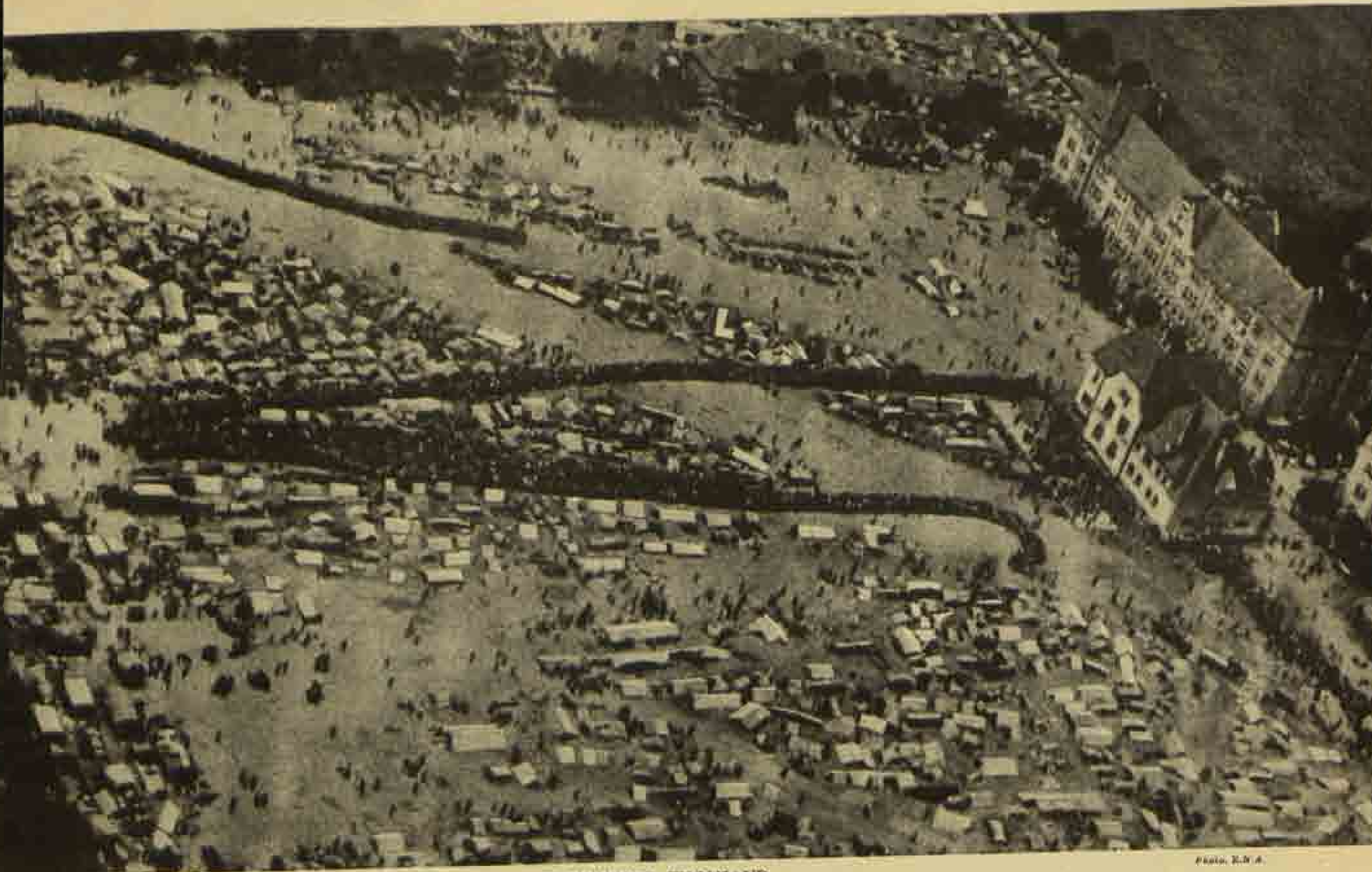
Photo, E.N.A.



JOY BELLS IN GERMANY

After the capitulation of France there were scenes of great rejoicing in Germany, where it was expected that the war would come to a speedy end, as had been promised by the *Fuehrer*. Above, German soldiers who took part in the Battle of France being welcomed in the Unter den Linden, Berlin. German bells were pealed for a week in honour of what Hitler termed 'one of the most glorious victories of all time.'

Photo, Associated Press



Photo, E.N.A.

PRISONERS OF WAR BY THE HUNDRED THOUSAND

Never before had such numbers of captives fallen into the hands of a victor as after the conquest of France. This remarkable photograph shows the enormous Nazi prison camp at Neu Breisach, with some of the thousands of Frenchmen doomed to languish in captivity while their mother country was despoiled. They were housed in flimsy tents, while their guards were sheltered in the fine barracks adjoining.





NO LONGER IMPREGNABLE

The age-old contest of projectile against armour was renewed in the assault on Belgian fortresses. Top photograph shows the effect of short-range artillery fire and of charges laid by pioneers at Maubeuge. Below, Fort Boncelles, on the right bank of the Meuse at Liège, battered by German guns. [See also photos on page 853.]
Photos, "Die Wehrmacht" (Berlin); E.N.A.

Mussolini entered the war on June 10. Paris was taken on the 14th, and Pétain sued for peace on the 17th. On the 18th the two Axis dictators met at Munich for the first of the deliberations on their armistice terms. The home of the Brownshirts did them due honour: flags, bands, bells, enthusiastic crowds, flowers, sunshine—the scene was well set for the consummation of their alliance. All over Germany the excitement was boundless. Nobody talked about the victims; widows and bereaved parents were not to wear mourning, for it was "unpatriotic" to introduce a sad note into the chorus of rejoicing.

The official figures of Germany's losses during the invasion of the West—estimated at 400,000-500,000 killed and wounded—were not given until much later. For the campaign in the Low Countries alone the casualties were admitted to be 10,000 killed and 40,000 wounded. If these figures were reliable, the total would indeed be low for the conquest even of only two of the three countries invaded, compared with the casualty list among Hitler's civilian victims. In Rotterdam alone no fewer than 30,000 dead and 20,000 wounded were counted, with 25,000 houses destroyed. The losses of the Dutch army during its four days' heroic but hopeless struggle were given—by German authorities—as 2,890 killed, 6,889 wounded and 91 missing. Afterwards, German films were taken of devastated Rotterdam and circulated with the caption: "What the British left over of Rotterdam."

Even so, the Dutch population proved insufficiently grateful for Hitler's "protection": for the sending of their children to Austria (nominally "as a return for Holland's hospitality to Austrian children after the last war," but in reality to drench them with the



DEVASTATION OF WAR—BY FRIEND AND FOE

This town in Southern France was shelled to ruins before the entry of the Nazis, some of whom are seen in the background, while a tank crosses a pontoon bridge. The German advance was checked by blowing up railways at vital points. Below is a main line junction on a route to the coast, destroyed by the B.E.F. *Photos, Associated Press; E.N.A.*



right Nazi spirit); for the granting to Holland, and equally to "Germanic" Flanders, of a seat of honour in the "all-Germanic community." A reporter of the "B.Z. am Mittag" in Berlin stated dolefully: "The Dutch population as a whole is not grateful for the fact that the German soldiers treated their country with care, and it refuses everything German." But even so, the German population was made to believe that their armies had freed Belgium and Holland from the British clutches.

Sorry Plight of France

As for the Belgians and the people in the regions of France that from 1914 till 1918 had been under the sway of the invader, they submitted for the moment, with set teeth and clenched fists, to their new ordeal. But the greater part of France was to learn the full measure of its plight only on June 22, when the armistice was concluded. The "negotiations" took place in the forest near Compiègne where the Germans had met the Allied plenipotentiaries in November 1918.

Hitler himself assisted at the ceremony for a few minutes, after having ordered all German bells to be rung for seven days, and swastika flags displayed for ten days in honour of "one of the most glorious victories of all times." On June 24 he addressed a message to his army, praising it for having, in a six weeks' heroic struggle against a brave enemy, "brought to an end the war in the West."

The following day, June 25, Hitler appeared in Paris, where, with a smile of satisfaction, he saw a gigantic Nazi flag waving on top of the Eiffel Tower. He paid visits to the Madeleine church (built by Napoleon in honour of the dead of his armies) and to the war trophies of that other conqueror. St. Quentin and Strasbourg, which so often had changed hands in the Franco-German struggle, were deemed worthy of a visit, and the Fuehrer's inspection of the now worthless Maginot Line put, in the German eyes, the finishing touch to a triumphal march destined to wipe out the "shame" of the 1918 defeat.

Whoever among the older or more moderate Germans had doubted the Nazi cause or the supreme wisdom of its creator was now convinced and, at least for the time being, converted into an enthusiastic admirer of Germany's "saviour." Many had been slightly worried by the superfluity of victories announced daily by the Supreme Command and by Goebbels' broadcasts: the bare facts set them at rest, and hardly anyone in Germany at that time doubted that the defeat of Britain





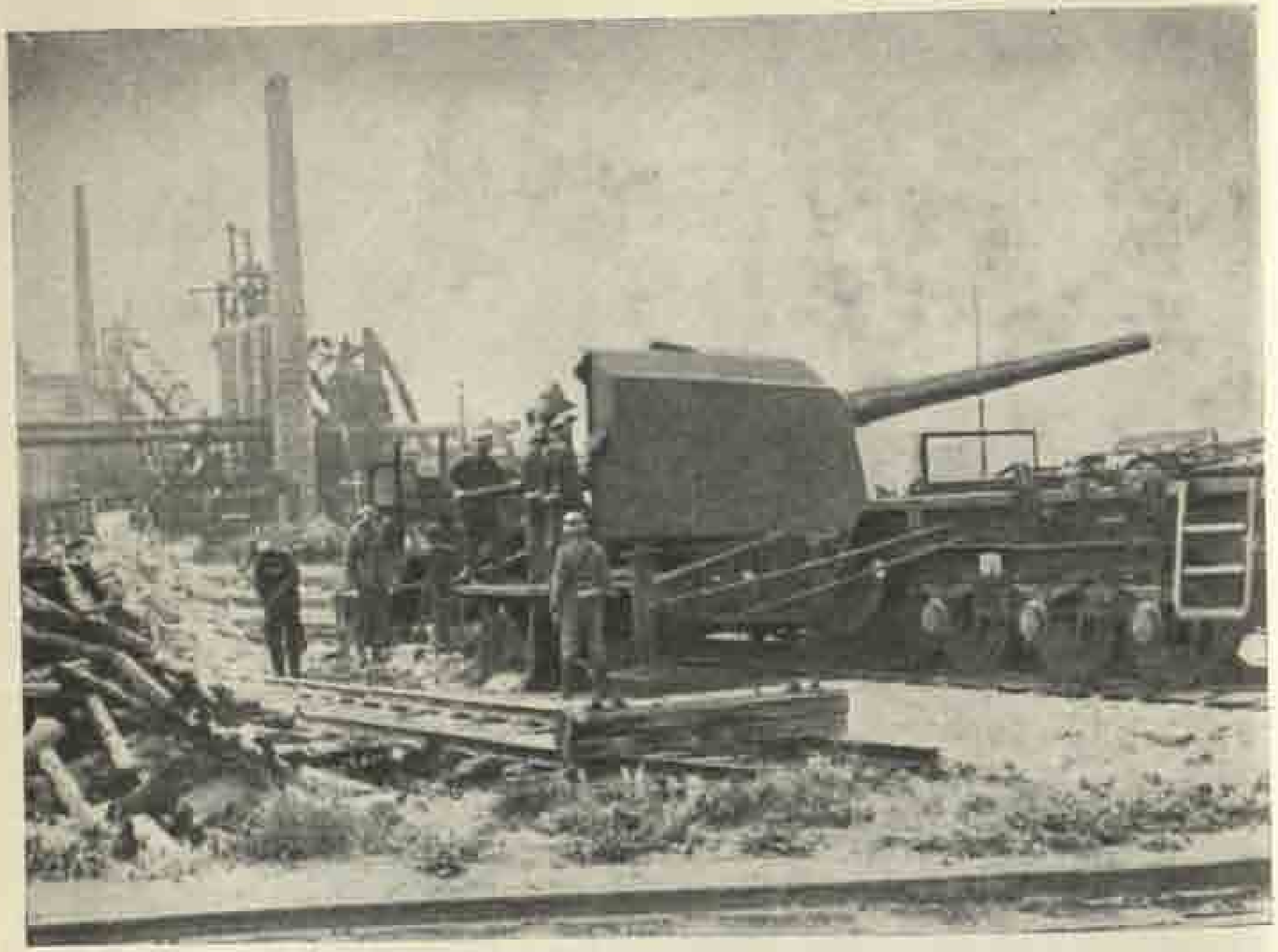




HOW FRANCE FARED UNDER GERMAN RULE

Nazi troops in Paris and other French cities made full use of their leisure, and on the right (lower photograph) some are seen in the galleries at Versailles; others (top, left) are enjoying a bathe at Biarritz. The conquerors lived on the fat of the land, but French men, women and children had to take turn in bread queues (above, left). German headquarters in Paris (top, right) was at the Hotel Crillon.

Photos, Wide World; E.N.A.



CHANNEL GUNS FOR THE SHELLING OF BRITAIN

When the Channel ports fell into their hands the Nazis set to work feverishly, installing many heavy guns (some captured from the French) along the narrowest part of the Straits. One, on a railway mounting, is seen above. In mid-August the Nazis began to shell Dover. Lighter weapons, such as the anti-tank gun below, were also set up and manned.

Photos, Wide World; Keystone



would be just another "walk-over," a matter of a few weeks.

Following the meetings of the Armistice Commission at Wiesbaden and the acceptance of the dictated terms by Pétain, came Hitler's greatest moment—his victory march through occupied France and entry into Paris, and his triumphal return from the Western Front, "where he has been directing operations for three months" (as the Propaganda Ministry said), to thronged, cheering, bell-ringing, flag-waving Berlin, hysterical with delight.

Jubilant Germany

There was a nine days' wonder in the capital of Greater Germany. Bands played, massed battalions goose-stepped in solid ranks between cheering crowds; the whole population of the city was *en fête*. But it was only a façade: behind the flags stalked the spectre of want: the voice of hunger was not drowned by the clanging of the joy-bells. Celebrations stopped short in the streets; in the homes tables were as bare as ever, and in the cafés and hotels the meatless days returned in endless monotony. The British sea-siege went on,

despite the overland victories of the German tanks and dive-bombers. The German was now receiving 11 per cent less sugar, 30 per cent less cheese, 41 per cent less fats, 43 per cent less meat, and 71 per cent fewer eggs than before the war—and his allowance of these foodstuffs before the war had not been generous.

Of the enormous quantities of food which the people had expected from conquered Denmark and Holland, little enough materialized. Much had been captured, but it had to be placed in store to replace the reserves used up during the stagnant winter. Moreover, the Dutch inundations, though they availed not against the invaders, had destroyed vast quantities of growing crops, and in Belgium the standing wheat had been brought low by battle. Moreover, the conquest of four countries had added four more nations to those to be fed by the victors, and had extended the effects of the blockade over four more wasted countrysides. Danish agriculture, the most valuable and intensively worked in Europe, was soon to be starved of its essential feeding stuffs and fertilizers by Britain's blockade, with the result that pigs and cattle had to be slaughtered in thousands. For the moment there was a glut of bacon and beef. The army as usual received the lion's share, the half-starved populace getting only a handful of the good things that were temporarily plentiful.

Belgium's Losses in 18 Days

The report of a survey made by the Commissariat of Reconstruction, Brussels (made public at the end of 1940), included the following summary of destruction caused during the eighteen days' fighting against the Germans in May, experienced mainly over a sector between the Meuse and Lys.

Towns damaged (out of 2,500)	2,000
Houses destroyed	9,832
Houses damaged badly ..	24,156
Houses damaged slightly ..	116,710
Highways destroyed ..	6,000 miles
Railway depots demolished, more than	190
Bridges and tunnels blown up	1,455

Thus the ground was ready and the time ripe for another gigantic propaganda campaign by Goebbels; this was to be the accusation that Britain was starving Europe, and was aimed at persuading the neutrals (and in particular the United States of America) that all the evils of famine impending on the Continent were the consequences of the British blockade. It was hoped that a great sympathetic campaign would be begun in the Americas, with the object of "saving starving Europe" and, incidentally, breaking the perfectly legitimate weapon of the British blockade. The first preliminary rumbles of this paper broadside were hardly heard, however, before Britain's propaganda had put it out of action once and for all by a far more vigorous and carefully planned counter-offensive. Articles in the press of the world, and broadcasts to every nation, warned the neutrals that the unjust accusation was in preparation and would soon be spread throughout the globe. Its nature and dimensions were exposed, and an answer to it publicly proclaimed, almost before it had had time to make itself heard. For once German propaganda was beaten at its own game, and the campaign was stifled at birth.

Nevertheless, some interesting facts did emerge from this paper war. The food and necessities situation was, it seemed, serious inside Germany by the



ANOTHER MUNICH

On June 18, 1940, Hitler and Mussolini met at Munich to decide the fate of defeated France. On the right is General von Epp, who had been Hitler's opponent in 1923, when the German Government crushed the Fuehrer's abortive Munich 'putsch.'

Photo, Keystone



THE FUEHRER GREETS NAZI WORKMEN

On the way through Germany to Berlin, there to make his 'victory' speech to the Reichstag on July 19, Hitler received the tumultuous welcome of a conqueror. The speedy collapse of France had dispelled the doubts of many who had been lukewarm Nazis, and they hoped for a like victory over Britain. Here Hitler is seen addressing men of a labour unit en route.

Photo, Keystone





WHEN HITLER MADE HIS 'FINAL APPEAL'

Flowers were strown in the Berlin streets along the route that Hitler took when he returned from the Western Front to make his speech to the Reichstag on July 19, 1940. At the left he is seen with Goering on the balcony of the Chancellery. Below, Nazi troops from the front marching through the Brandenburger Tor, Berlin.

Photos, Keystone; Associated Press



middle of July. There was no fruit to be had at all in Berlin; leather was so strictly rationed that shoes had to be made of glass and wood. At the same time, the shortage of tobacco—the "poor man's nerve tonic"—caused a marked increase in the demand for, and sale of, drugs and sleeping draughts.

Ill-health was general. The suicide rate had greatly increased, and the incidence of both serious and slight diseases reached epidemic proportions. The vice-chairman of a Japanese Economic Mission to Berlin said on July 27: "All we were able to buy on the streets of Germany were neckties and socks" (which luxuries the German workers





FRANCE'S CHERISHED PROVINCES LOST AGAIN

Alsace and Lorraine were in German hands from 1870 until 1919, and passed again under alien rule with the defeat of France in June, 1940. Above, Hitler with Dr. Meissner and General Dollmann are seen leaving the beautiful cathedral of Strasbourg, capital of the lost provinces, in July. Left, French signs in the city being replaced by Nazi ones.

Photos, E.N.A.

could not find the wherewithal to purchase).

Germans had been promised an era of unexampled prosperity when the Nazis should come to power. In fact, since 1933 Germany had been not only the worst fed but also the most heavily taxed country in Europe. The ordinary impositions of the income tax were large, but in addition there were innumerable compulsory (though called voluntary) exactions in the form of enforced contributions to the Winter Help Fund, the Party funds, the Hitler Youth, and other organizations. By June, 1940, the average German worker was paying four times the tax paid by the average British worker. A worker, for example, who received 100 marks (equivalent to about £8) a week had to pay out in taxes alone a total of £50 18s. per annum, made up as follows:

	£	s.
Income Tax	19	10
War Tax	9	15
Unemployment Insurance	9	15
Sickness Insurance	5	17
Labour Front Contribution	6	1
	£50	18

An English worker with the same weekly salary at that time paid only £11 17s. total taxes. To the German's

expenditure must also be added the numerous coerced payments mentioned above.

The proportion of income returned to the state in taxes was exceptionally large in Germany. For example, a single man earning £500 per annum was then paying out 29.2 per cent of his income in taxes; a married, childless man with the same income paid 16.2 per cent; and a married man with two children, 10.3 per cent. The figures for the same groups in Great Britain were 21.1 per cent, 15.2 per cent, and 7.3 per cent respectively. There was further imposed in July a "turnover tax" of two to two-and-a-half per cent on every transaction made within the confines of the Reich.

Burden of Taxation

Such a parlous condition as that depicted above was expected to have its outcome in another "peace offensive" by Germany. Economically the country was in no fit state to endure a long war, and politically her position was less prepossessing than it had seemed. Her partner, Russia, had returned to her former wayward path, and on June 28 had made an incursion into Germany's own Lebensraum by invading and seizing Bessarabia, a strategically important part of Rumania. This had been done without the foreknowledge or consent of the German Foreign Office.

Another "peace offensive" was clearly due. But again Dr. Goebbels was anticipated. The peace move was timed to be made in a speech by Hitler himself on July 19. Five days earlier German hopes were shattered by an oration by Mr. Churchill, in which he declared that Britain would fight street by street in London and all her cities before she would make peace. Hitler's speech had therefore to be recast and moderation replaced by threats. Made on July 19, the speech was widely advertised throughout the world as "Hitler's last appeal to reason," but it contained no tangible proposals for agreement between Britain and Germany. "If you do not make peace with me at once, I will let loose upon you the furious might of my invincible Luftwaffe" was approximately the tenor of the harangue as far as it concerned Britain. But Mr. Churchill had anticipated it on behalf of Britain five days before.





A 'LAST APPEAL TO REASON'

In a radio picture (top, right) received via America Hitler is seen making his speech to the Reichstag on July 19, 1940. Early in August parts of the speech, printed on broadsheets, were scattered by Nazi aircraft over Britain, but had an unconvincing effect (above).

Photos, Wide World; G.P.A.

Hitler's "appeal to reason" was a poor thing indeed. He told his dumbfounded Reichstag that on June 17 a simple soldier had found in a railway compartment documents going to "prove" that the Allies had concocted sinister plots for the occupation of Norway, Sweden and the Balkans; that, after all, not he but they had declared war on futile grounds, for "all he had claimed was Danzig, a city German throughout," that he never had wanted to destroy the British Empire.

The "appeal" went unheard, and the British went bravely forward to meet the worst the enemy could do. The Battle of Britain started with heavy blows. Already, in June, after the successful air raids of the R.A.F. had had to be admitted in Berlin, the Germans said that no military objectives had been hit. On the day of Hitler's speech the German Press confessed to some disquiet about the bombardment of the Dutch bases, local sympathizers with the Allies being made responsible for the exact aiming of the R.A.F. At the same time the German Press gave such optimistic forecasts as "The Battle for Britain is imminent"; "There is only a slight possibility of Britain's offering any resistance"; "She is trembling on the brink of disaster."

Chapter 101

AMERICA AND THE ALLIES: THE END OF ISOLATION

Roosevelt's Warning—An Enormous Defence Budget—Reactions to the Nazi Invasion of Scandinavia and the Low Countries—The President's Appeal to Mussolini—He Admonishes the Isolationists—Britain the Bulwark of Freedom—'All Help Short of War'—Wendell Willkie's Views—Fall of France—Republicans Join Roosevelt's Cabinet—America 'Already in the War'

When President Roosevelt opened the third session of the 76th Congress of the U.S.A. on January 3, 1940, he made the keynote of his address a warning to the American people that the United States could not live as a self-contained unit inside a high wall of isolation while outside that wall the rest of civilization and the commerce and culture of mankind were shattered. (*See* page 678.)

While the United States was prepared to cooperate in a world that wanted peace, the President made plain, she must also be prepared to take care of herself if the world could not attain peace. So he went on to ask Congress to sanction big increases in the expenditure on the Army and Navy, and to levy such additional taxes as might be necessary to meet such expenditure incurred in bringing the national defences into a proper state of efficiency. Then, in a fine passage, he concluded with the words, "We must keep ablaze in this continent the flames of human liberty, reason, democracy, and fair play, as living things to be preserved for the better world that is to come."

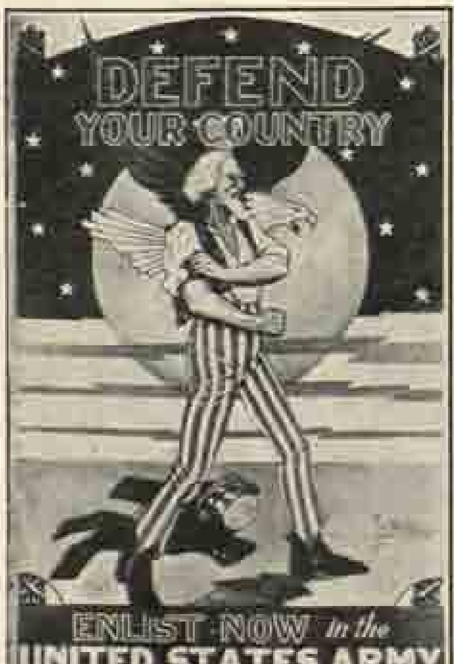
On the day following the President's address the Budget was presented to Congress, and it showed a total of $1,850,000,000 for defence purposes. Of this vast sum nearly $1,000,000,000 was earmarked for the Navy, and in February the House of Representatives passed a Naval Appropriations Bill which provided for the construction of 19 new warships—including two super-Dreadnoughts of 45,000 tons each—and some 350 aeroplanes, as well as the completion of more than a hundred naval vessels already under construction.

As winter gave place to spring, American interest in the European scene became ever greater; and as the interest of the Americans grew, so, too, grew their sympathy with the nations who, one after the other, were brought under the yoke of the dictatorships.

First there was Finland. The Americans laughed to scorn the idea that the little republic had had any designs on her great neighbour. They cheered when the Finns gained a victory over the Soviet invaders; they urged that all possible aid should be rendered to a little country struggling to maintain its independence; they grieved when at last Mannerheim was compelled to come to terms with Stalin. A few weeks passed and Denmark and Norway were overrun, and again America left no doubt where her sympathies lay. Within a few days the President had issued a forthright denunciation of Nazi perfidy. "Force and military aggression," he said, "are once more on the march against small nations," and he deplored the attack on two countries which had maintained through many generations the respect and regard not only of the American people but of all peoples. "If civilization is to survive," he said, "the rights of smaller nations to independence,

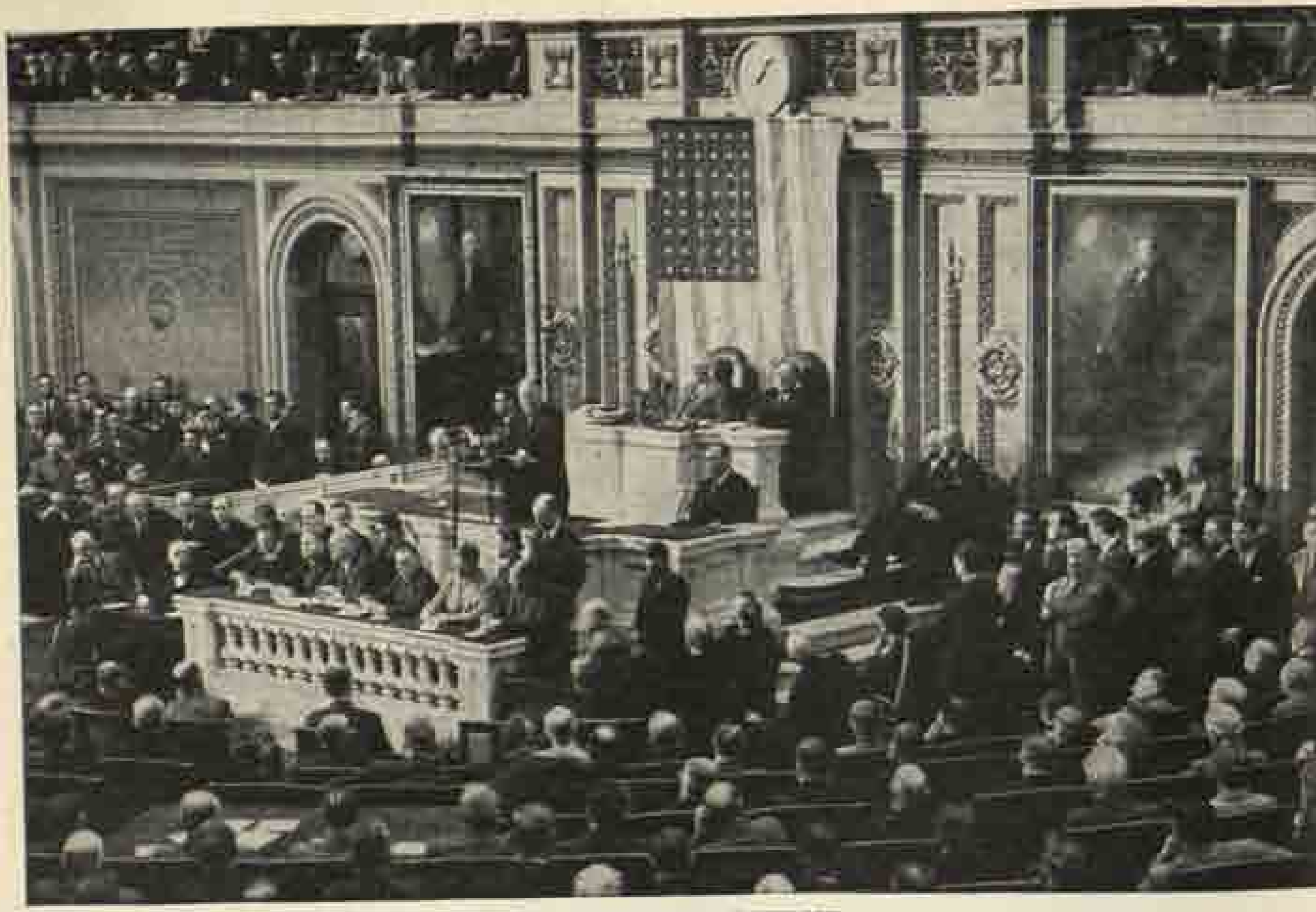
UNITED STATES STIRRED TO THE DEPTHS

How far American opinion had moved forward by the summer of 1940 is indicated by the posters reproduced below. That on the left was designed to stimulate recruiting for the U.S. Army; the centre one was used in a nation-wide campaign to raise £2,000,000 for the relief of victims of the European war. The most telling appeal of all (right)—circulated by the William Allen White Committee—foreshadowed in a dramatic manner the fruits of an isolationist policy.









AMERICA VOTES COLOSSAL SUMS FOR NATIONAL DEFENCE

Above, Mr. Roosevelt is addressing a joint session of both Houses in the Senate Chamber in May, 1940, when he asked for an allocation of a billion dollars (1,000,000,000) for U.S.A. defence. The President told of his desire to increase the production of aircraft to 50,000 a year.

Photos, Keystone; Associated Press



ROOSEVELT TALKS TO THE DEFENCE COMMISSION

On May 30, 1940, the Defence Commission set up by President Roosevelt held its first meeting when plans for the expenditure of the vast sum of 4,300,000,000 dollars were considered. Here the President (back to camera) is outlining his proposals. Facing him are, left to right, W. S. Knudsen (General Motors Corpn.); R. Budd (Burlington Railroad); E. R. Stettinius, Jr. (U.S. Steel Corpn.); H. H. Woodring (Secretary for War); R. Jackson (Attorney-General); L. Henderson (Securities Commission); and C. Edison (Secretary of the Navy).

to their territorial integrity, and to unimpeded opportunity for self-government must be respected by their more powerful neighbours." Only a week later there were rumours of Japanese designs on the East Indies in the eventuality (already all too probable) of Holland becoming involved in the European war; and Mr. Cordell Hull, the American Secretary of State, found it advisable to issue a warning that any intervention in the internal affairs of the Dutch East Indies, or any alteration in the status quo in the region by other than peaceful processes, would be prejudicial to the peace, security and stability not only of the East Indies but of the entire Pacific. Thanks to this firm attitude the Dutch East Indies were not seized by Japan when early in May Holland was invaded and subjugated by the Nazis, another act of aggression which was denounced in the strongest terms by every organ of American opinion. "The Nazis," said the "New York Times," "have built up worldwide horror and contempt which will some day plough them under." President Roosevelt expressed his personal indignation at the latest Nazi aggression and all Dutch credits were frozen so as to prevent their appropriation by Germany.

A few days later the President, sensing another extension of the conflict,

appealed to Mussolini to keep out of the war, and he sent a similar message to Admiral Horthy, Regent of Hungary. His appeal to Mussolini fell on deaf ears, however, and on the night of June 10 the Italians launched their unprovoked attack on France. A few hours before the first shots were fired the President scathingly denounced Mussolini's action in an address to the students of the University of Virginia. "The hand that held the dagger has stuck it into the back of its neighbour," he bitingly declared, but his address was remarkable for much more than a dramatic phrase. The President proceeded once again to attack the isolationists amongst his own people who still held "to the now somewhat obvious delusion" that the United States could remain a lone island in a world dominated by the philosophy of force.

"Such an island may be a dream of those still talking as isolationists," he said, "but to me and the overwhelming majority of Americans today it represents a helpless nightmare of a people without freedom, a people lodged in prisons, handcuffed, hungry, fed through bars from day to day by contemptuous, unpitying masters . . ."

How could America prevent the building of that prison in their own midst?

"Overwhelmingly," he said, "we as a nation are convinced that victory for the gods of force and hate would endanger the institutions of democracy in the Western World, and that, equally, therefore, the whole of our sympathies lie with those nations which are giving their life blood to combat



PERIL FROM TRAITORS WITHIN THE GATES

The United States authorities were keenly conscious of the danger of subversive agents, and this poster was widely circulated. That the menace was a real one and no mere scare was borne out by official information published some months after.

AMERICA STUDIES THE WAR NEWS

Events on the Western Front were closely followed by Americans, many of whom felt that the Nazi inroads directly menaced their own freedom. Below is the scene in Times Square, New York, just after fresh bulletins from Europe had been posted up.

Photo, Wide World







AMERICANS RETURN HOME

Laden with over 1,000 Americans from the war zone the S.S. 'Washington' left Galway for New York early in June, 1940. She was challenged by a U-boat off Portugal on June 11, ordered to 'abandon ship,' but later allowed to proceed on her voyage. Right are refugees on the liner 'Manhattan' arriving New York from Genoa.

Photos, Keystone ; Fox

these forces." So thrusting aside the last suggestions of a timorous and Pharisaic neutrality, he concluded: "We will extend to the opponents of force the material resources of this nation, and harness and speed up the use of those resources in order that we ourselves may have the equipment and training equal to the task in any emergency. All roads leading to those objectives must be kept clear of obstructions. We will not slow down or make a detour. All signs and signals call for Full Speed Ahead."

Resolved to Help Britain

Ominous spring merged into disaster-filled summer, and as the German war machine battered its way across the freedom-loving countries of Europe, the American people to an ever greater extent rallied behind the President in the resolve to give Britain and France all the help of which they were so desperately in need.

The demand was not by any means an unselfish one; rather the American man in the street, level-headed fellow that he is, was rapidly coming to the conclusion that the only way of saving his own liberties and of preventing his own country from being attacked or even invaded was by seeing that the Allies were maintained in the fighting line. "They are holding the front line trenches; we must provide them with guns and shells and all that is necessary to keep the enemy at bay"—that was the attitude of an ever-growing number of American men and women. "Defend America by Aiding the Allies" was the name given to a Committee formed by Mr. William Allen White, one of the leaders of the Republican Party, and among its members were listed Mr. H. L. Stimson, Col. Frank Knox, both prominent Republicans, Dr. N. M. Butler, the world-famous President of Columbia University, and many another prominent American personality. The Republicans, indeed, vied with the Democrats in urging the cause of the democracies, and it was not long before Mr. Wendell Willkie, the Republican nominee for the Presidency, was rivalling the President in his demands that aid to the Allies should be speeded up to the utmost.

Long before the Battle of the West had come to an end the great American republic had realized that it, too, was in danger, and so there was practically no opposition to the vast programme of rearmament on which it was now about to embark. In a special message to Congress on May 16 the President asked for a further $1,182,000,000 for military purposes, so that the country might be put in a position to meet any lightning offensive. He begged Congress and the country to examine without self-deception the dangers which now confronted them. He painted a picture—and everyone knew that there was no touch of exaggeration in it—of motorized armies sweeping along at the rate of 200 miles a day, of hordes of parachutists being dropped from the air, of troops being landed from 'planes in open fields, on highways, and at civil air ports, of the treacherous use of the Fifth Column. . . In the face of such dangers it was necessary that essential equipment of all kinds must be obtained or produced for a much larger army. Military and naval equipment must be replaced or modernized; production of everything needed for the forces must be facilitated; and all Army and Navy contracts must be speeded up with the factories working on a 24-hour basis. Furthermore, the United States should be geared up to be able to turn out at least 50,000 'planes a year. But he was careful to ask Congress not to take any action which would in any way hamper and delay the delivery of American-made 'planes to foreign nations which had ordered them, or which might seek to purchase more 'planes. "That, from the point of view of our own national defence, would be extremely short-sighted."

As the Allies reeled beneath the hammer-blows of the Nazis, the demand that they should be given all American help short of declaring war was voiced ever more loudly. As early as May 28 Mr. Willkie roundly declared that Britain and France constituted America's first line of defence, and urged that they should be given all possible help short of the dispatch of troops. General Pershing, leader of the American Expeditionary Force to France in 1917, declared that the Allies were "fighting a war for civilization and holding our front line," and that therefore war material should be dispatched to them in unlimited quantities.

Mr. William Allen White, in the name of his influential Committee, urged that more and more aircraft should be sent, that credits should be provided (so far, of course, all the orders executed for the Anglo-French Purchasing Commission had been strictly for cash); that, indeed, "all measures short of war" should be taken in support of the Allies. Some went even further—like Miss Dorothy Thompson, famous

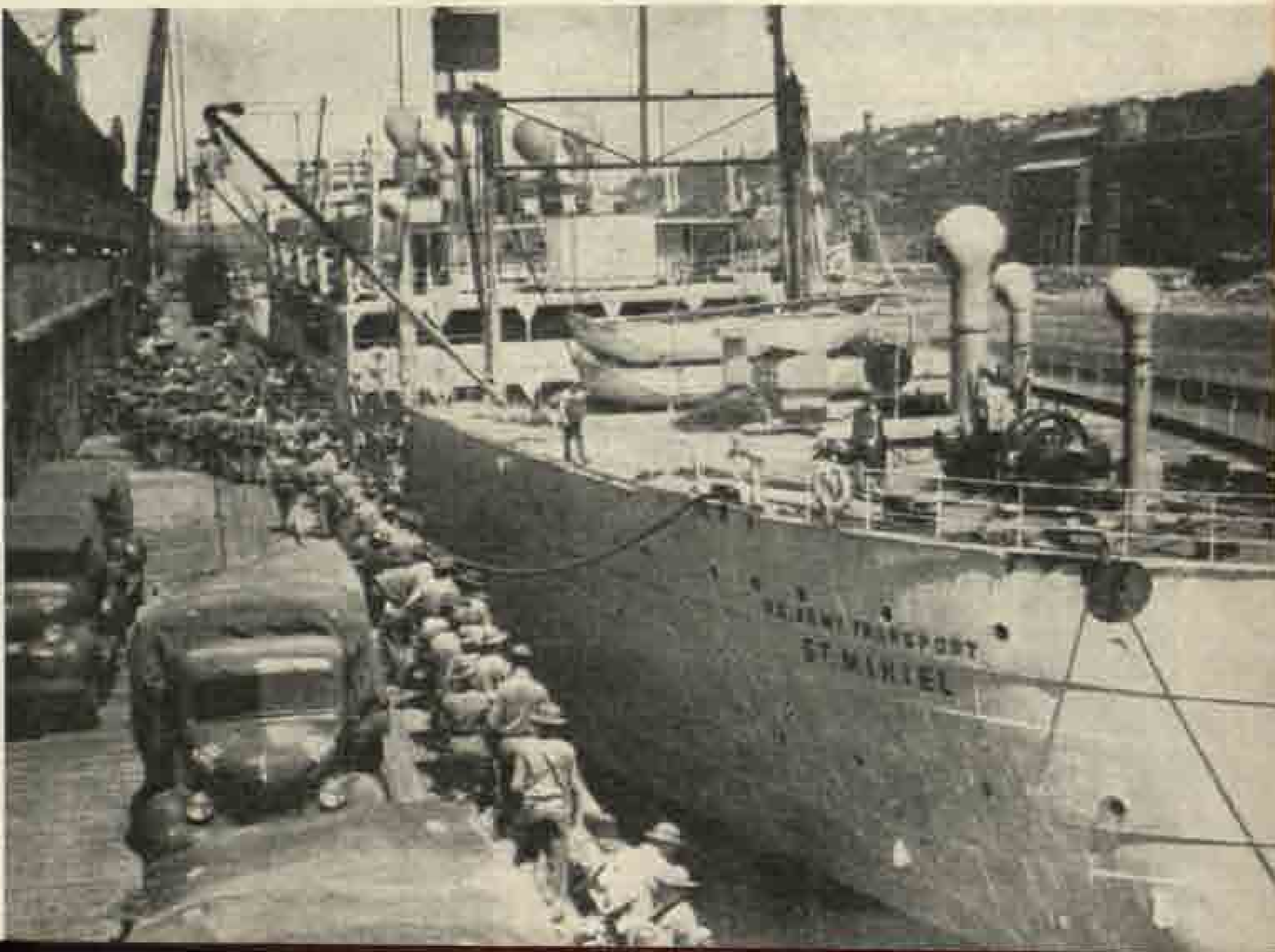




THE SLUMBERING GIANT STIRS

Aroused to her imminent danger, the United States speeded up her arms production : at top, right, is a scene in the shell department of Frankford arsenal. She also strengthened her defences, and above are gunners manning an A.A. weapon in the Panama Canal Zone, while below is the transport 'St. Mihiel' taking on board at Seattle troops, guns and ammunition for defence of the Alaskan air bases.

Photos, Associated Press ; Wide World



columnist wife of Sinclair Lewis, who said in an open letter to Congress that if the United States were determined that the Nazi flag should not wave over the world, and that the principles of the Declaration of Independence and of Abraham Lincoln should not perish from the earth, then America should go to war, and go to war now.

In the Senate Mr. Key Pittman, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, boldly declared that the



"time had come for the United States to stand up before the nations of the world and declare that, while reasserting its non-belligerency, its neutrality in respect to the European war has come to an end."

The American people, he went on, had thought that by practising extreme neutrality they could insure themselves against the peril of war. But the small neutrals of Europe had thought so too, until their soil had been drenched with the blood of thousands of innocent victims.

"The fate of the Allies," he declared, "is likely to be decided in the next few weeks. Backed by every material aid that this country can spare, they can stand their ground and finally win. Regardless of the technicalities of neutrality, I urge that this aid be given . . ."

Then a fresh note of urgency was imported into the debate. France was cracking beneath the strain of battle, and not once but several times M. Reynaud asked President Roosevelt for 'planes and yet more 'planes. American aid, great as it was believed to be, did not arrive in sufficient quantities or in time to save Reynaud's Cabinet, and when he fell France slipped along the path which led to all the humiliation of the Armistice and post-Armistice periods. But Britain refused to be daunted by the collapse of her ally. Though in imminent danger of invasion, though deprived of the assistance of the French fleet and with many a flank left open through the defection of her ally, Britain was still fighting and still boldly declaring that whatever happened she intended to go on fighting, "if necessary for years, if necessary alone," until victory should be won. In America the spectacle of her deter-

U.S.A. Applauds Britain's Stand

mined stand led to an unparalleled outburst of sympathy and to an intensification of the demands that more, much more, should be done to give her instant aid. On June 21 President Roosevelt took into his Cabinet two of the most prominent of the Republicans, Henry L. Stimson, who had been Mr. Hoover's Secretary for War, and Col. Frank Knox, owner and publisher of the "Chicago Daily News," who was appointed Secretary for the Navy. Both men had closely identified themselves with the demand for utmost aid to Britain; only a few days before his appointment Mr. Stimson had urged that 'planes and other munitions should be dispatched to Britain and France "by every means in our power, if necessary in our own ships and under convoy," and Colonel Knox had day by day argued in the columns of his powerful journal that "every day we delay in aiding the Allies, we delay our own defence."



'NATIONAL SERVICE TRANSCENDS POLITICS'

On June 21, 1940, President Roosevelt, 'on behalf of national defence,' nominated two prominent Republicans to his Cabinet: Colonel Frank Knox (top) as Secretary for the Navy; and Henry L. Stimson (here seen taking the oath in the presence of Mr. Roosevelt) as Secretary for War.
Photos, Associated Press; Topical

Now the American public were left with no excuse for ignorance of the real state of affairs; they were told as plainly as they could be told that if Britain followed France into the pit of defeat then the war would be brought inevitably, and sooner rather than later, to the American continent. Now as never before the Americans realized—perhaps with a feeling of half-shame—that the real defender of their Atlantic shores was the British Navy, and they learned that their President had asked Mr. Churchill to give a guarantee that, in the event of Britain's defeat and downfall in Europe, the British Navy would never be allowed to fall into the hands of the Germans.

There were still isolationists in America, for America is a big place and the Americans are a mixed bunch. To the rancher in the Middle West, the miner in Arizona, the fruit farmer in California, the battle that was raging on the Somme or in the English Channel must have seemed very, very far away. But the Americans are possessed of a Press which, whatever its faults, keeps its readers thoroughly well informed as to the course of events in other continents and countries; and long before the summer had passed into autumn the great majority of the American people—whether they lived in New York or New Orleans, whether they tapped a typewriter on the 25th floor of a skyscraper, or did the chores in a shack in Arizona, or picked cotton in Tennessee—realized the truth of old Senator Borah's admission made shortly before he died: "We are already in the war, with everything short of soldiers."

Historic Documents. CLVI–CLIX

ROOSEVELT ON THE FUTILITY OF ISOLATION

The impossibility of holding aloof and an increasing urgency for new defence measures were the two subjects which President Roosevelt sought to impress upon the American people early in 1940. We give extracts from four important speeches: first, his message to Congress, January 3; second, a broadcast address, March 16; third, a message to Congress, May 16; and last, a broadcast to the American people, May 26.

I CAN understand the feelings of those who warn the nation that they will never again consent to the sending of American youth on the soil of Europe. But as I remember nobody has asked them to consent, for nobody expects such an undertaking. The overwhelming majority of my fellow-citizens do not abandon in the slightest their hope and expectation that the United States will not become involved in military participation in the war.

I can also understand the wishfulness of those who over-simplify the situation by repeating that all we have to do is to mind our own business and keep the nation from war.

But there is a vast difference between keeping from war and pretending this war is none of our business. We have not to go to war with other nations, but at least we can strive with other nations to encourage the kind of peace that will lighten the troubles of the world and by so doing help our own nation as well.

It becomes clearer and clearer that the future world will be a shabby and dangerous place to live in, even for Americans, if it is ruled by force in the hands of the few. Already swiftly moving events all over Europe have made us pause to think in a longer view. Fortunately, that thinking cannot be controlled by partisanship. The time is long past when any political party or any particular group can curry or capture public favour by labelling itself "the peace party" or "the peace bloc." That label belongs to the whole of the United States and to every right-thinking man, woman and child within it. . . .

We must look ahead and see the possibilities for our children if the rest of the world comes to be dominated by concentrated force alone. We must look ahead to see the effect of our own future if all small nations throughout the world have their independence snatched from them, or become the mere appendages to vast and powerful military systems.

We must look ahead to see the kind of lives our children would have to lead if a large part of the rest of the world were compelled to worship the god imposed by a military ruler, or were forbidden to worship God at all; if the rest of the world were forbidden to read and hear facts, and were deprived of the truth which makes men free.

We must look ahead and see the effect on our future generations if world trade is controlled by any nation or group of nations which sets up that control through force.

It is true, of course, that the record of past centuries includes the destruction of many small nations, and includes the enslavement of people and the building of empires on the foundation of force. But quite apart from the greater international morality which we seek today, we recognize the practical fact that, with modern weapons and modern conditions, modern man can no longer lead a civilized life if we are to go back to the practice of wars of conquest of the 17th and 18th centuries. . . .

Of course, the peoples of other nations have the right to choose their own form of government, but we in this nation still believe that such a choice should be predicated on certain freedoms which we think essential everywhere. We know we ourselves will never be wholly safe at home unless other Governments recognize such freedoms. . . . [*Jan.* 3, 1940.]

THE early feudal days set castle against castle, which ended only in the setting up of governments able to maintain order within their states. Today we seem once more to be in an era in which organized attacks are seeking to divide men and nations from one another. Religion seeks not to divide but to unite, by the old method of goodwill. In the dark days of the present that ideal has been maintained in the minds and hearts of the average citizens of all nations.

Today we seek a moral basis for peace. It cannot be a real peace if it fails to recognize brotherhood. It cannot be a lasting peace if the fruit of it is oppression, starvation, cruelty, or human life dominated by armed camps. It cannot be a sound peace if small nations live in fear of powerful neighbours. It cannot be a moral peace if freedom from invasion is denied to the small nations. It cannot be an intelligent peace if it denies free passage throughout the world to that knowledge of ideals which permits men to find common ground. It cannot be a righteous peace if the worship of God is denied. [*Mar.* 16, 1940.]

THESE are ominous days—days whose swift and shocking developments force every neutral nation to look to its defences in the light of new factors. New powers of destruction, incredibly swift and deadly, have been developed. Those who wield them are ruthless and daring. No old defence is so strong that it requires no further strengthening, and no attack is so unlikely or impossible that it may be ignored. Let us examine without self-deception the dangers which confront us. Let us measure our strength and our defences without self-delusion. . . .

Our own vital interests are widespread. More than ever the protection of the whole American hemisphere against invasion or control or domination by non-American nations has the united support of the 21 American republics, including the United States. And more than ever in the past this protection calls for ready-at-hand weapons capable of great mobility because of the potential speed of modern attack. . . .

We have had the lesson before us over and over again. Nations that were not ready found themselves overrun by the enemy. So-called impregnable fortifications no longer exist. An effective defence by its very nature requires the equipment to attack the aggressor on his route before he can establish strong bases within the territory of American vital interests. . . . Our task is plain. Our defences must be invulnerable, our security absolute. [*May* 16, 1940.]

OBVIOUSLY a defence policy based on the idea of isolationism for the Americas is merely to invite a future attack. For those who had closed their eyes, for any of many isolationist reasons, and for those who would not admit the possibility of the "approaching storm," the past two weeks have meant the shattering of many illusions. They have lost the illusion that we are remote and isolated, and therefore secure against dangers from which no other land is free. In some quarters, with this rude awakening has come fear bordering upon panic. It is said that we are defenceless. It is whispered by some that only by abandoning our freedom, our ideals, our way of life, can we build our defences adequately, can we match the strength of our aggressors.

I have not shared these illusions; I do not share these fears. We are now more realistic, but let us not be calamity howlers and discount our strength. Let us have done with both fears and illusions. . . . Today's threat to our national security is not a matter for military weapons alone. We know of new methods of attack, the "Trojan Horse," the fifth column that betrays a nation not prepared for treachery. Spies, saboteurs and traitors are the actors in this new strategy. With all these we must deal vigorously.

At this time when the world—and the world includes our own American hemisphere—is threatened by forces of destruction, it is my resolve and yours to build up our armed defences to whatever heights the future may require. We shall build them swiftly, as the methods of warfare swiftly change. We defend, we build a way of life not for America alone but for all mankind. [*May* 26, 1940.]





GLIMPSES OF U-BOAT CAMPAIGN THROUGH GERMAN EYES

Admiral Marshall, after distributing decorations to the crew of a U-boat just back from a marauding expedition, wishes the men 'Good Luck !' Below, on the conning tower of another submarine, is a caricature of Mr. Churchill with the words 'You have been told !' and also the claim that 115,000 tons of shipping had been sunk. The top left-hand photograph shows a U-boat leaving port escorted by a destroyer ; a close-up of the look-out man is given below, right.

Photos, E.N.A.; Keystone; Fox.





MERCHANT SHIPPING POSITION AFTER THE LOSS OF THE CHANNEL PORTS

Nazi Control of Channel Ports Changes the Shipping Situation—Meeting the Menace of Bomb and Torpedo—Policing the Mediterranean—South-about Round the Cape—Busy North Atlantic Route—Debits and Credits After the German Conquests—Nazi Counter-Blockade—Raider in the South Atlantic—Captain Arundell's Log—Losses off Norway—Ex-Passenger Liners Sunk by the Enemy—The 'Meknès' Outrage

Events on the continent of Europe in the spring of 1940 were dramatic and far-reaching. Their influence on the two blockades, British and German, was equally profound. When Germany had completed her conquest of Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium and France in turn, and had persuaded Italy to enter the war in her support, the British blockade of Germany and occupied Europe became far nearer complete than had been possible when Scandinavia and the Low Countries were neutral. Supplies of many essential commodities no longer leaked through as they had done before; or, if they did, the scale of leakage was insignificant. The British occupation of Iceland and the Faroe Islands was an important factor in preventing blockade-running to the Norwegian coast. While, however, the British blockade became far tighter, Germany's looting of the countries she had conquered added temporarily to her reserves of food and of some raw materials; she also gained access to the production of those countries—subject always to the restrictive activities of the Royal Air Force.

On the other hand, the effects of the Blitzkrieg on the German attempt to blockade the British Isles by sinking merchant shipping wherever it could be found, regardless of nationality, were even more apparent. From this and other causes, by the end of June the shipping situation had altered completely.

A full examination of the changes which occurred in May and June is important for an understanding of vital factors affecting the later course of the war.

After France Collapsed

In the first place, Germany's occupation of the long coastline stretching from North Cape in the Arctic to the Spanish frontier gave her bases from which submarines and aircraft could operate on practically every approach to the British Isles. Strategically, her position suddenly became almost ideal; it could only have been improved had it been possible—which it was not, owing to Britain's command of the sea—for Germany to have taken and held Iceland. The English Channel was menaced not merely by the proximity of German bomber, submarine and E-boat (motor torpedo-boat) bases, but by enemy coastal batteries established opposite Dover. The whole of the British eastern coast was vulnerable to air attack, and its approaches to submarine attack. The coastal trade on the east coast was shielded from submarines and E-boats by the huge mine barrage established at the beginning of the war. In regard to the western approaches, these were open to attack by long-range bombers and by submarines based on French ports in the Bay of Biscay and others facing the Channel.

To a considerable extent these factors favourable to Germany could have been minimized by strengthening the convoy system—i.e. enlarging the naval escorts and reducing the number of merchant ships in each convoy—and also by increasing the defensive air patrols of the Coastal Command. But it was not possible to adopt either course on the scale required. The explanation involves Italy's entry into the war. The most important effect on the shipping situation was indirect, for few Italian submarines were able to slip past Gibraltar to aid Germany in the Atlantic blockade. Indeed, according to official Italian claims—usually exaggerated—only 33 merchant ships had been sunk up to December 10, 1940. This claim was a revealing indication of the amount of support Germany had obtained from the Italian fleet; the communiqué referred, of course, to all operations—by surface and underwater craft, in the Mediterranean, Atlantic and Red Sea.

The indirect result of Italy's entry into the war was the need to strengthen the British Mediterranean Fleet. British forces in the Mediterranean during the first few months of 1940 were



U-BOAT LAIR ON FRENCH ATLANTIC COAST

The French naval port of Lorient became one of the chief bases from which U-boats carried out their war against British shipping. Its shipbuilding yards, magazines, docks and armament works soon felt the effect of the heavy counter-offensive by our bomber squadrons, which in the ensuing months attacked Lorient almost daily. The Avant Port de Guerre and naval barracks are here seen.
Photo, E.N.A.

undoubtedly greatly inferior to those which Mussolini could muster, but the balance was restored before the opposing fleet became an enemy. The additional strength had to come from other theatres of war, where the principal task was the escorting of merchant ships, and at a time when the shipping situation required an increase and not a diminution in naval escorts. Thus it was vital to Germany's blockade tactics that the Italian fleet should not risk any engagement in the Mediterranean which might so affect the balance of forces that British units could be released for escort duties in the Atlantic.

Up to this period of the war there had been no question as to the efficiency of the convoy system. The last mention of convoy figures to be made in the weekly Admiralty statements was in the notice issued on July 16. This pointed out that, measured in terms of tonnage, nearly one hundred million tons gross of shipping had at that time been escorted by H.M. ships since the war began, representing a cargo capacity of about 150 million tons. The tonnage of the 47 ships which had been lost was about one quarter of 1 per cent of the gross tonnage convoyed. In numbers, about 28,000 ships had been escorted up to that date, and of the total of 47 ships lost, no fewer than seven had been sunk in the previous week.

As for the question of increasing air escorts, the intensification of the war in the air made this difficult at a time when British air strength was relatively so inferior to that of Germany and an invasion of the British Isles was threatened. The invasion threat, incidentally, also meant maintaining stronger naval patrols in the English Channel than would otherwise have been necessary; and this again was a drain on the forces available for convoy duties—particularly on destroyers.

Threatened Invasion

The result of the operation of all these adverse factors is clearly shown by the Table in page 1062 and the graph in page 1068. The curve of British losses moved sharply upwards in June. The tonnage loss in this month was more than double the figure for May, even excluding the semi-naval losses off the French ports during the evacuation of the B.E.F. There was a further rise in succeeding months. In July an average of 57,000 tons gross of British shipping was lost per week, compared with an average of 17,500 tons in May. It became apparent that this considerable increase in sinkings reflected an intensified effort by Germany. The cutting of Britain's vital communications with the Empire, America and other oversea sources of supplies on which the British war effort was utterly dependent became, indeed, Germany's principal offensive aim.

Germany's ability greatly to improve her counter-blockade as a result of her conquests in Europe was only one of several factors responsible for the complete change in the shipping position at this time. In summary, the other factors were (1) the relief to British shipping of the burden of carrying considerable cargoes to France, for that country had been far from self-supporting in ships; (2) the loss to Britain of the near sources of supplies in Scandinavia, the Low Countries and France;

Result of German Conquests





DANISH AND NORWEGIAN SHIPPING COME TO BRITAIN

The Nazis tried to persuade Danish and Norwegian skippers to put into Spanish and Italian harbours, but Britain broadcast an appeal to the merchantmen to bring their cargoes to our ports. Here Danish bacon is being unloaded at a West Coast port. Mr. I. Hysing Olsen, a leading Norwegian shipowner, took over control from London of his country's merchant fleet.

Photos, "Evening Standard"; Fox



Photo: Fox

OUR NAVY MAINTAINS ITS TRADITIONS

When approached in Northern waters by a British warship at the beginning of March, 1940, the German merchantman 'Arucas,' trying to run the blockade with a valuable cargo of mercury, was scuttled by her crew, who then took to the boats. One boat capsized, but a number of the men were rescued by lifelines. The other boat was brought against the lee side of the warship, and in this photograph her occupants are seen being helped to safety by British sailors, some of whom jumped into the icy waters for this purpose. Of 53 men on board the 'Arucas,' 40 were saved; three others died after being taken from the sea. (See also illustrations, page 1069.)





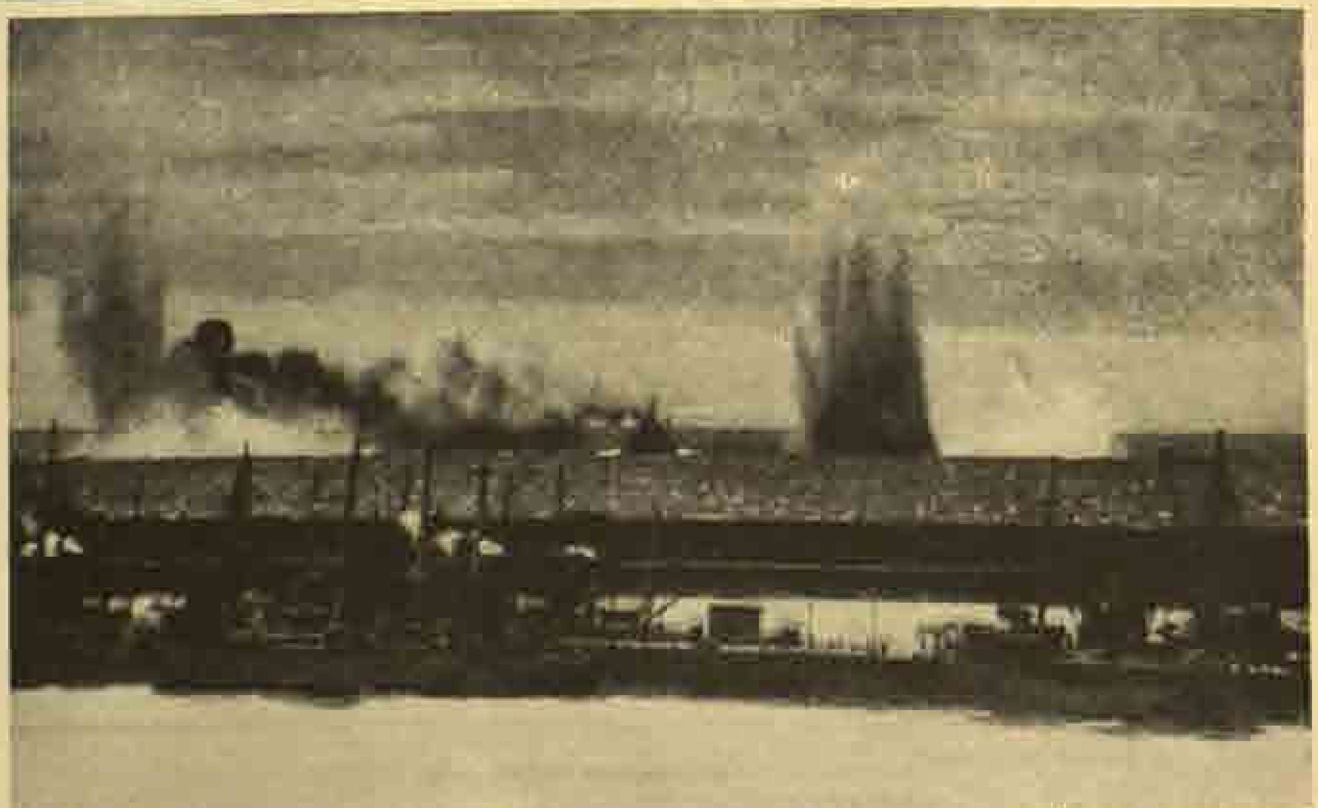
LUFTWAFFE FAILS TO STOP BRITISH CONVOYS

With the Channel ports in his hands in June, 1940, and airfields near the French coast at his command, Hitler tried to stop the passage of British shipping through Dover Straits. But, as the above photograph shows, our convoys went on serenely under the guns of their Naval escorts.

On July 14 a horde of Nazi dive-bombers attacked the convoy, left, and bombs are seen bursting around the British vessels. The convoy continued unscathed—but nine of the raiders were shot down.

Right is a photograph of another raid on shipping off the S.E. coast of Britain. Great spouts of water are seen from bombs that burst near one of our destroyers. Ten of the enemy aircraft were shot down in this encounter. Later raids were just as fruitless, and after a while the Luftwaffe abandoned them.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Planet News; Fox





BRITAIN'S OVERSEAS TRADE WENT ON DESPITE THE NAZIS

Britain's export trade was well described by the President of the Board of Trade as one of her war weapons, and many industries were encouraged to divert as much as possible of their output to export markets. Commodities as different in nature as biscuits and pottery were shipped abroad in large quantities, and this photograph shows a new British freighter making her way out into the ocean from a home port. Projecting from her bows is an anti-mine device.

Photo, "The Times"

THE 'ALCANTARA' MEETS THE 'NARVIK'

On July 28, 1940, the former Royal Mail liner 'Alcantara' engaged the Nazi raider 'Narvik' off Brazil. The enemy was hit and had to reduce speed, but made off under a smoke screen. One of her shells holed the 'Alcantara' in the engine room (below), and the British vessel also lost speed, so much so that she could not keep the raider within range. Note that the 'Alcantara' has lost her foremost funnel. She put into Rio de Janeiro for repairs, where these photographs were taken.

Photos, Keystone





and (3) the huge increase in the tonnage available for Allied service brought about mainly by the decision of Norway, Holland and Belgium to join in the struggle against Hitler. The first of these factors need not be enlarged upon, except to remark that it was also no longer necessary to maintain in food and equipment a large Continental army. The second and third factors tended to cancel each other out in terms of importing capacity, leaving a favourable balance which, on a short view, more than compensated for the intensified sinking campaign.

With the cutting off of the occupied countries as sources of supply, the nearest route (formerly the English Channel and the North Sea) was now the North Atlantic. Agricultural produce, timber, ores, etc., had to be fetched from farther afield, so that many more ships were needed to carry a given quantity of imports in a given period. Stricter rationing of foods and unessential imported goods was brought in to relieve the pressure on tonnage.

The closing of the Mediterranean route also reduced the amount of available shipping by increasing the length of haul. This course was adopted by the Admiralty when it became clear that Italy was preparing for war, and came into effect on May 1. Although the British Fleet retained command of the Mediterranean, merchant ships continued to be diverted to the Cape route. Imports from eastern Mediterranean countries were carried via the Suez Canal, an anomaly of world trading which, for all his vision, Ferdinand de Lesseps could hardly have foreseen! Geographically, the Mediterranean is ideal for surprise commerce raiding; Britain could have continued to use this route only by providing such strong naval escorts as to make the proposition impracticable.

Without the addition to the Allied shipping resources of the merchant fleets of Norway, Holland and Belgium, and of the French and Danish ships voluntarily surrendered or forcibly acquired, the course of events as described above would, in the summer of 1940, have brought the peril of starvation and industrial immobilization much nearer than the peril of invasion. The volume of tonnage which came into



SKIPPER OF THE 'HAXBY'

Capt. Arundell, of the 'Haxby,' was for weeks a prisoner aboard a Nazi raider. Transferred by his captors to a Norwegian vessel, he was rescued by the British submarine 'Truant' and landed at Gibraltar. (See text p. 1067.) *Photo, Associated Press*

ALLIED AND NEUTRAL MERCHANT SHIPPING LOSSES FROM ENEMY ACTION					
	Sept. 3, 1939–April 30, 1940	*May 1–June 2*	*June 3–June 30*	*July 1–July 28*	*Sept. 3, 1939–July 28, 1940*
	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross
BRITISH					
(a) Mercantile voyages	732,396	82,697	190,605	228,585	1,232,081
(b) Naval operations	—	30,519	40,915	—	71,433
(c) Naval auxiliaries	16,697	2,886	92,220	—	111,813
(d) Naval trawlers	7,743	5,061	121	2,300	15,235
	756,836	121,160	323,879	228,885	1,430,560
ALLIED ..	112,833	135,824	157,838	42,852	449,347
NEUTRAL ..	869,669 523,514	256,984 47,545	481,717 96,411	271,537 60,538	1,879,907 728,006
Totals ..	1,393,183	304,529	578,158	323,073	2,607,913

(a) Includes fishing vessels.
(b) Merchant ships diverted for use in combined naval and military operations during evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from French ports.
(c) Merchant vessels, except trawlers, converted for service as armed merchant cruisers, transports, etc.
(d) Fishing vessels converted for naval duties, e.g. minesweeping.

Allied service as a result of the extension of the war during April to June 1940 amounted to more than 7,000,000 tons gross—equal to nearly two years' losses of British and Allied shipping at the high loss rate established during July. The

ENEMY MERCHANT SHIPPING LOSSES TO AUGUST 4, 1940			
	Sunk	Captured	Total
	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross
GERMAN ..	660,000	258,000	918,000
ITALIAN ..	105,000	150,000	255,000
Totals ..	765,000	408,000	1,173,000

total was made up of about 3,750,000 tons of Norwegian shipping (vessels of a very serviceable type), about 2,000,000 tons of Dutch shipping, and about 350,000 tons of Belgian, making 6,100,000 tons for the three new Allies; in addition, about 800,000 tons of Danish and French ships came into British service, and about 150,000 tons of the Italian mercantile marine were captured. A certain amount of the shipping of our new Allies, particularly Norwegian, was already on time-charter to the British Ministry of Shipping, but the continued service of these vessels was now assured.

Shortly after the invasion of the countries which became Allies, the respective governments requisitioned their national fleets by royal decree. In each case administration was vested in special shipping and trading committees established in London and working in cooperation with the British Ministry of Shipping. The ships required by the British authorities were obtained from the committees under special agreements, on much the same lines as vessels had been time-chartered from the shipowners of those countries before Germany had violated their neutrality. The rates of hire were, for various reasons, generally higher than the requisition rates for similar British vessels, the whole of the British ocean-going merchant fleet now being under requisition, as explained in Chapter 66. Thus, there was no system of coordinated



FUTURE SKIPPERS IN TRAINING

These young men are being trained at the Fleetwood School of Navigation to take up posts on merchantmen. Here a group of students is seen receiving instruction about compass deviation.

Photo, Fox

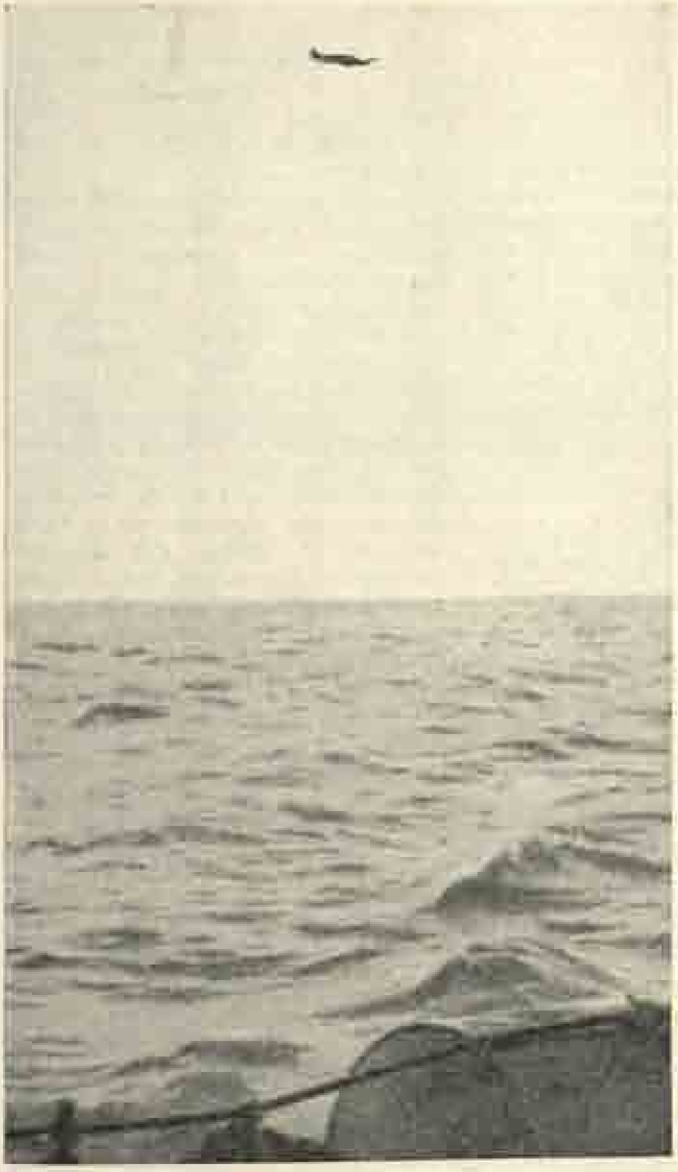
Allied shipping control; instead, the Ministry of Shipping had undivided control over British ships it had requisitioned, the foreign ships it had chartered from Allies and neutrals, and the Danish, French and enemy ships temporarily acquired or captured. The remaining Allied tonnage was operated by the shipping and trading committees, either in the Colonial trades (Dutch East

NAZI PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE

Nazi doctrines were never more truly exemplified than in the torpedoing of the Blue Star liner 'Arandora Star' on July 2, 1940. She was taking about 1,500 Axis nationals to an internment camp overseas. Mainly because they fought among themselves for places in the lifeboats, 470 Italians and 143 Germans lost their lives in this disaster.

Photo, P. A. Vicary









NAZI ATTACK ON CONVOY BRINGS SWIFT RETRIBUTION

After getting control of the Channel ports in the summer of 1940, the Germans hoped to paralyse British shipping by aerial attacks, but failed utterly in this attempt. These photographs show how one dive-bomber met its fate. A convoy was steaming along off the East Coast when a raider appeared (top, left) and swooped to the assault. The escorting destroyer (above) moved up to cover the convoy and opened fire, bringing down the Nazi in flames (top, right).

Photos, G.P.U.

Indies, for example) or in neutral trading outside the theatre of war; but the amount of "free" tonnage was not large.

A curious situation in regard to shipping control arose during July. At this time the British Government's full requisition policy had been applied to ocean-going liners and tramp shipping only. About half the tanker fleet was also requisitioned. The remaining tankers, as well as short-sea traders and coastal vessels, were controlled by a system of licensed voyages, except to the extent that individual ships were required for naval duties, such as mine-laying, minesweeping, transports, and so on. When trade with the near Continental ports ceased after the fall of France, the volume of employment available to British coastal shipping*—and particularly coastal liner shipping—was seriously restricted. Up to that time, for instance, the French coal trade had been one of the most active routes for British ships since the beginning of the war. This situation was accentuated by the addition to the supply of coastal ships of numerous small Belgian and Dutch vessels. The economic effects were such that early in July the coastal liner shipowners agreed among themselves to ask the Minister of Shipping to requisition outright this section of the industry and thus guarantee its remuneration, on however small a scale. This was probably unique in the relationship between Government and industry. The request was granted later, by which time the available employment had, however, increased considerably.

*The term "coastal" included ports within the limits of the Elbe and Brest.

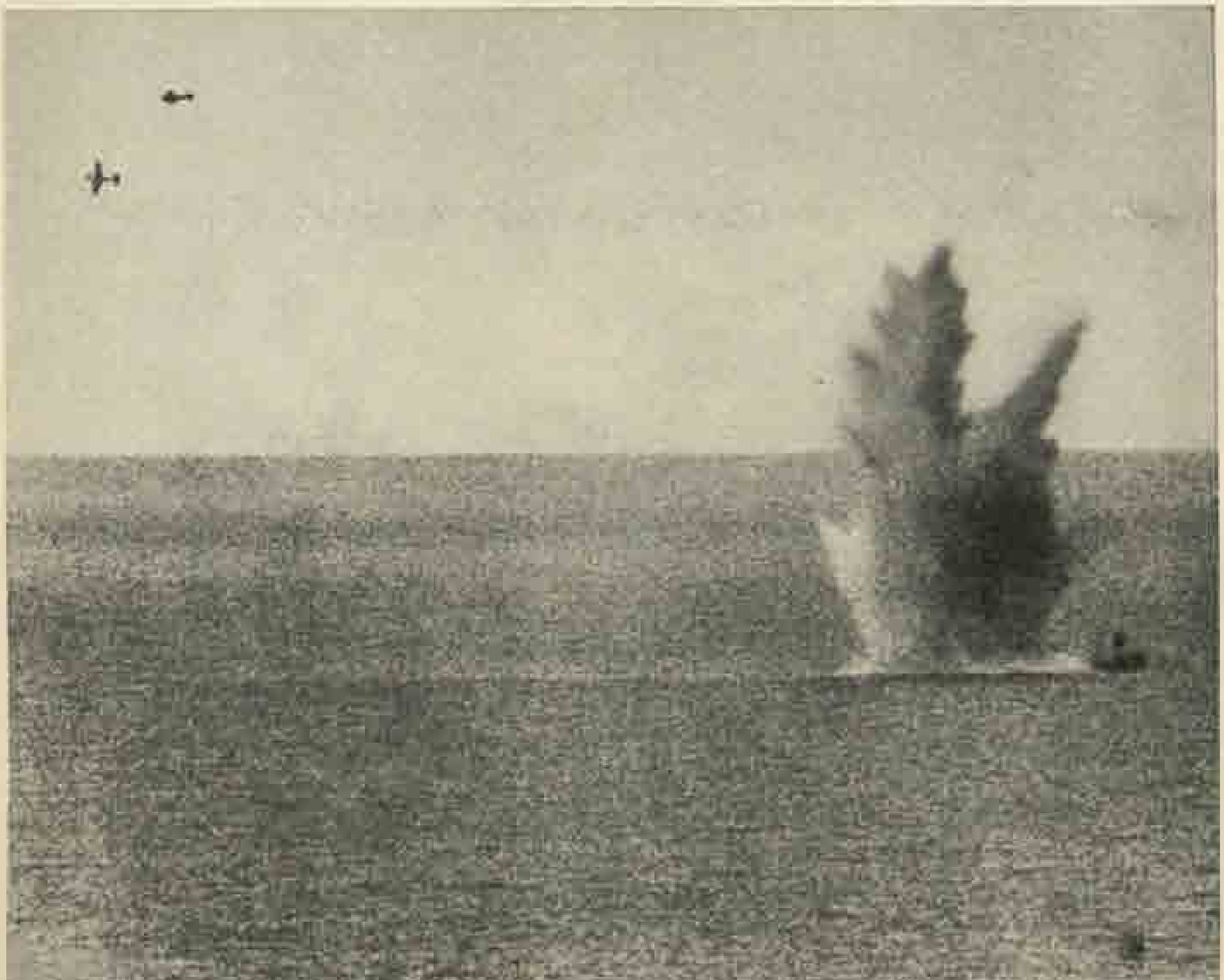
Contraband Controls Closed

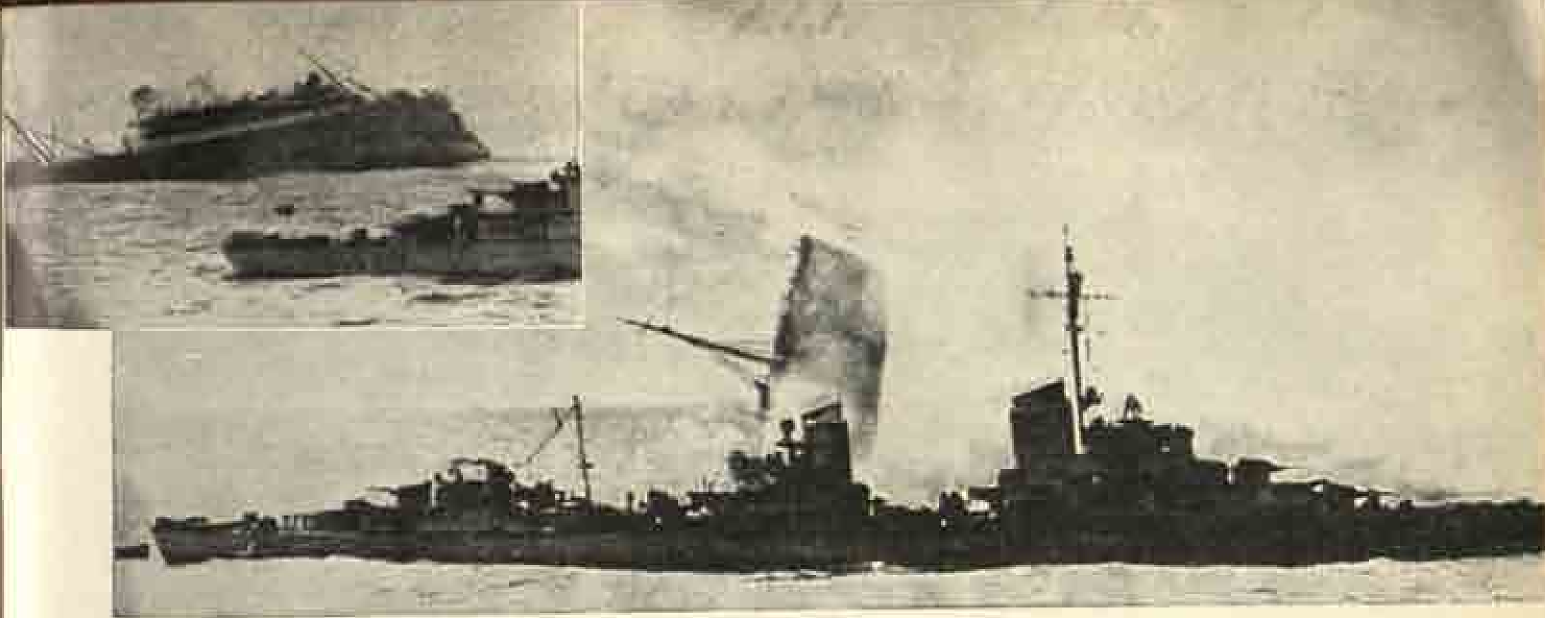
Another result of the changed situation on the Continent was to render superfluous the contraband control stations which had been established in the Orkneys and at the Downs. The purpose of these stations was to examine ships' cargoes destined for near-by European ports so as to ensure that contraband goods were not trans-shipped to Germany. After Germany's conquests the semi-blockade became a total blockade, and no trade with enemy territory by sea was permitted. Accordingly, these stations were closed towards the middle of May.

LUFTWAFFE PREFERRED THIS SORT OF TARGET

During the later months of 1940, in their indiscriminate attack upon everything upon the seas the Nazis did not spare lightships, though all other nations agreed in exempting such vessels from hostile action. After the bombing attack on a light-vessel here seen (which killed two and injured others of the crew) the raiders moved on, soon to be intercepted and destroyed by the R.A.F.

Photo, Keystone





WHEN BRITISH FORCES EVACUATED NARVIK

The transport 'Orama' (19,840 tons), a former Orient liner, was torpedoed in Norwegian waters early in June, 1940, during the evacuation of Narvik. Here are two German photos purporting to show the last moments of the vessel; standing by is a German destroyer. *Photos, E.N.A.*



weapons at her command. The German raiders—warships and converted merchant vessels—were not numerous, but, relatively to the number employed, they succeeded in taking a fairly heavy toll of merchant ships.

On July 13 a disguised merchant ship, renamed "Narvik" and mounting four guns on each broadside, sank the British cargo vessels "King John" (5,228 tons gross) and "Davisian" (6,433 tons) in the region of the West Indies. About a fortnight later the raider was sighted in the South Atlantic by the British armed merchant cruiser H.M.S. "Alcantara"—an ex-Royal Mail liner. The enemy, a ship of considerable speed, escaped with the aid of smoke floats after a lucky hit had reduced the

A complete change in the methods of conducting the blockade was not, however, to come into effect until the beginning of August, as will be shown in a later Chapter.

In her counter-blockade Germany's most important weapon was undoubtedly the submarine, though it was by no means her only weapon. The sinking campaign was conducted also by aerial bombs and machine-gun fire; by mines broadcast indiscriminately on the sea-lanes—as usual in violation of former pledges as well as international law—or sown by aircraft off harbour entrances; by torpedoes fired from E-boats; and by commerce raiders, not only in the Atlantic but in oceans which could not be reached with any other of the



NAZIS CALLED IT 'A PARTICULARLY FINE SUCCESS'

Carrying some 1,200 French naval officers and ratings for repatriation in unoccupied French territory, the unarmed and brilliantly illuminated liner 'Meknès' was torpedoed at close range by a German E-boat on the night of July 24, 1940. She sank in a few minutes, but nearly a thousand survivors (some seen at left) were rescued by British warships. *Photos, G.P.U.*





E-BOATS ON THE PROWL

German 'Schnellboote' or E-boats were expected to do great destruction to British shipping, and also to assist in the oft-threatened invasion of our shores. Here are German photos of these fast motor torpedo-boats. Top, E-boats coming alongside the mother-ship. Opposite, getting ready to fire a torpedo. Below, looking aft from a boat, travelling at speed.

Photos, Keystone



"Alcantara's" speed, but not before the British ship had also obtained a hit. There were no other reports of a ship having been sunk by a raider during June or July, but the "Tropic Sea," a Norwegian vessel of 5,781 tons gross, was captured by the enemy on June 18. It was nearly three months later that this came to light. The circumstances are worth recording in some detail.



TIMELY REMINDER

The little envelope 'sticker' at the left was used by a London firm on its overseas correspondence. At the right is a sticker issued in reply by a business concern in Egypt.



BEATING THE COUNTER-BLOCKADE

As a consequence of the German occupation of Western Europe in the summer of 1940, British imports from the Continent virtually ceased. But alternative sources in the Empire and elsewhere were soon tapped, though the greatly increased distances involved were a severe handicap. Here are household matches marked with such unfamiliar places of origin as India, Canada, Thailand and Portugal.

The story began on April 17, when the British cargo steamer "Haxby" (5,207 tons gross), bound from Greenock in ballast for a Texas port, dispersed from her convoy in the Atlantic and proceeded independently. A week later, at 6.30 a.m., a steamer flying the Greek colours crossed the "Haxby's" bow. Covering the borrowed colours, she hoisted the Nazi ensign and opened fire with four 6-inch guns firing high explosive and incendiary shells. She kept up salvo after salvo for about half an hour. In the log which he prepared—it was many weeks before the world knew its contents—Captain Arundell, master of the "Haxby," recorded the events in these words:

I decided to abandon ship, the whole of the survivors having to take to the water wearing life-belts, and with only hatch boards and shifting boards to keep them afloat. When the frigate captain saw us in the water he put out boats and picked up survivors. We were then taken on board the raider and each of us was issued with the following articles: one shirt (wood-pulp), one pair socks (wood-pulp), one set under-wear (wood-pulp), one canvas suit, one pair canvas shoes (soles ersatz leather), tooth-brush, tooth-paste and bakelite "glass."

Raider proceeded in south-easterly direction when on May 2 she laid mines off West Africa. She then proceeded in a westerly direction.

May 7, 8 and 9. Raider oiled from German tanker "Winnetou."

May 10. Rounded Cape Horn.

June 12. From 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. raider laid about 230 mines around the coast of New Zealand. Raider then proceeded at slow speed in an easterly direction.

June 18. In position lat. 28·40° S., long. 166·04° W., raider intercepted Norwegian motor vessel "Tropic Sea" loaded with wheat for the U.K. Oil tanker "Winnetou" again came along to oil raider.

June 28. It was decided to send "Tropic Sea" as a prize to Germany, and to transfer self and officers and crew of "Haxby" to "Tropic Sea."

June 30. "Haxby's" crew transferred to "Tropic Sea" under command of captain and some crew of tanker "Winnetou" and twenty armed guards from raider. With machine-guns fitted covering boats and each guard with revolver and hand grenade in



EXPORT TRADE HELPS TO FILL OUR WAR CHEST

British silks in the form of hosiery yarns, spun silks, ribbons, and woven and printed piece-goods make a valuable contribution to our export trade, and here such goods are being packed. Note the slogan: 'Britain Delivers the Goods.'

Photo, "The Times"



CHEAP TARGET FOR NAZI BOMBER

It is probable that in the bombastic Nazi claims the little Irish schooner 'Loch Ryan' was given the status of a cargo liner, but it was surely a waste of ammunition to bomb and machine-gun such a tiny ship. Despite two direct hits, she managed to reach a West country port.

Photo, Fox

belt we proceeded towards internment port, which was to be Bordeaux.

July 24. Sighted and rounded Cape Horn.

September 3. 5.30 a.m. A.T.S. an alarm was sounded as a submarine had been sighted on the port quarter. Guards were all smiles thinking it to be a Nazi, but their faces changed when they realized it was our Navy. Orders were given to abandon ship, and a few minutes after we were in the boats bombs were exploded in the "Tropic Sea" and she was scuttled. Myself, my crew, and the Norwegian captain and his wife were taken on board the submarine, which proved to be H.M.S. "Truant." When we were intercepted we were less than 400 miles from Bordeaux and internment.

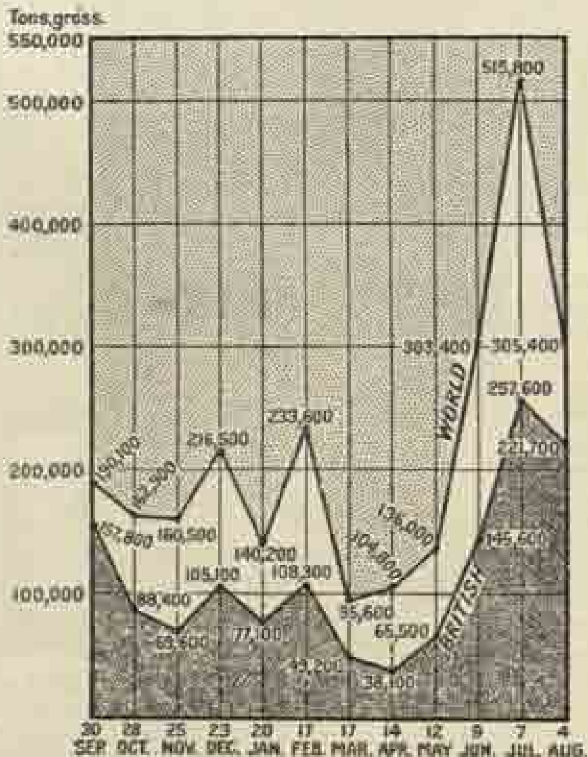
September 6. Landed at Gibraltar.

September 19. Sailed from Gibraltar, I as a courtesy passenger and the remainder of my crew as D.B.S.s.

October 6. All of remaining members of crew of "Haxby" arriving at their homes and with their loved ones at home.

An interesting passage in the log is the reference to mine-laying. The raider sowed mines off West Africa and, on June 12, around the coast of New Zealand. On June 18 the Canadian-Australasian passenger liner "Niagara" (13,415 tons gross) struck a mine in the Tasman Sea and sank. This was the first loss to occur in those waters and, to quote an Australian journal, "came as a sharp surprise to Australia." The 135 passengers and 200 crew were saved. The "Niagara" was registered in London.

During June our Norwegian campaign came to a close, and the evacuation lost us the armed merchant cruiser "Vandyck" (13,241 tons gross) and H.M. transport "Orama" (19,840 tons), sunk by German surface craft. In the "Vandyck" two officers and five ratings were killed and twenty-nine officers and 132 ratings taken prisoner. The "Vandyck" was well known as a cruising and passenger liner, flying the house flag of the Lamport and Holt Line; the "Orama" was owned by the Orient Line. Two more ex-passenger liners serving as armed merchant cruisers were sunk during June: the "Scotstoun" (formerly "Caledonia," of 17,046 tons gross, belonging to the Anchor Line) and the "Andania," a liner of 13,950 tons, owned by the Cunard White Star. This last-named concern suffered another heavy loss in the "Lancastria," a passenger liner of 16,243 tons gross, sunk while evacuating British troops from St. Nazaire during the final rescue of the B.E.F. from France. As told in Chapter 97, she was hit simultaneously by four high explosive bombs and sank in ten minutes. Some 2,500 troops were saved.



British and World Shipping Losses, Sept. 1939–Aug. 1940

Different in character was the sinking, early in July, of the "Arandora Star," a former cruising liner of 15,501 tons owned by the Blue Star Line. She had on board 1,500 German and Italian internees and was bound for Canada when she was torpedoed without warning and some six hundred of these lost their lives. (See Chapter 104.) One other notable loss should be recorded, since it shed a lurid light on German methods of conducting sea warfare.

Loss of 'Arandora Star'

Towards the end of July, when the situation in France became less obscure, the British Government decided to repatriate those French soldiers and seamen in England who wished to return to unoccupied territory. This intention, together with the names of the ships to be used, as well as other details, were made known to the Pétain Government. One night, shortly after leaving a British port en route for France, the French passenger liner "Meknès" (6,127 tons gross), with over 1,000 naval officers and ratings on board, was torpedoed and sunk by a German E-boat firing her torpedoes from very close range. The "Meknès" was illuminated, and the French colours could be seen from a considerable distance, even at night. There could have been no question of an E-boat making a mistake, an excuse which might have served had the attacker been a submarine. From the total complement of 1,281, only 891 survivors were landed at British ports, though it was believed that others might have reached the French coast in some of the ship's boats.



THE END OF A NAZI BLOCKADE RUNNER

Listing heavily, the German merchantman 'Arucas' is about to take her final plunge into the icy waters of the North Sea. In March, 1940, with a cargo of mercury, she had tried to run the blockade, but on the approach of a British warship was scuttled by her crew, who took to the boats or leapt into the water as seen above. The sea was too rough for a British boat to be launched, but most of the unhappy men were rescued by lifeline, and by naval ratings who jumped into the water (see photo in page 1057). Below, artificial respiration being performed on a Nazi survivor.

Photos, Fox



Historic Documents. CLX–CLXIII

SHADOWS OF DICTATORSHIP OVER THE BALKANS

After the collapse of France both Hitler and Stalin turned to the Balkans to grab what they could of territory or to impose political and economic restrictions upon such countries as were helpless to resist their demands. We give below extracts from addresses showing the contrast between Rumania's panic attitude and the steadfastness of Turkey in face of aggression and hostile propaganda.

REPRESENTATION MADE BY M. MOLOTOV TO M. DAVIDESCU, RUMANIAN MINISTER IN MOSCOW, JUNE 26, 1940:

IN 1918 Rumania took advantage of the military weakness of Russia and robbed the Soviet Union by force of a part of her territory—namely, Bessarabia, and thus broke the century-old unity of Bessarabia (principally occupied by Ukrainians) and the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. The Soviet Union has never been reconciled to this enforced robbery of Bessarabia and has often and openly expressed its mind to the whole world.

At the present moment, when the military weakness of the Soviet Union belongs to the past, and the present international situation demands the most speedy solution of unsolved problems which exist as an inheritance from the past in order to lay the foundation of a permanent peace between States, the Soviet Union considers it as necessary and timely, in the interests of re-establishing justice, to find mutually with Rumania a solution of the question of the return of Bessarabia.

The Soviet Government declare that the question of the return of Bessarabia is organically connected with the question of the return to the Soviet Union of that part of the Bukovina where the predominant majority of the population is connected with the Soviet Ukraine by common historical destinies, as well as through the similarity of their language and national composition. This act is even more just, as the handing over of Northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union may be regarded as a compensation, though only in a small degree, for the tremendous loss which the Soviet Union and the population of Bessarabia have suffered through the 22 years of Rumanian rule in Bessarabia.

The Soviet Government propose to the Royal Government of Rumania (1) the return of Bessarabia to the Soviet Union, and (2) the transference to the Soviet Union of the northern part of Bukovina. The Soviet Government hope that the Rumanian Government will accept this demand, and thus permit the peaceful solution of the long-standing dispute between the Soviet Government and Rumania.

M. GIGURTU, RUMANIAN PRIME MINISTER, IN A BROADCAST ADDRESS, JULY 6:

THE directing of Rumania's foreign policy within the framework of the Axis combination is an accomplished fact. By this policy we return to the old traditions of the Rumanian State. It means the total transformation of the internal political structure, dominated by an effective and creative nationalist conception. . . . The events which are transforming the Continent have not shaken Rumania's traditional policy of good-neighbourliness. To preserve this policy of peace in this corner of Europe we have made the most painful sacrifice, the value and meaning of which we hope have been understood by all.

LORD HALIFAX, BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY, IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS, JULY 11:

WE remain bound to Turkey by the closest ties. It will be remembered that on the entry of Italy into the war the Turkish Prime Minister declared that Turkey would maintain her present attitude of non-belligerency. His Majesty's Government fully appreciated the circumstances which led to this decision of the Turkish Government, who throughout have acted in close contact with his Majesty's Government. Meanwhile our Treaty with Turkey stands, as does the loyal friendship and sympathy between our two peoples on which the Treaty is based, and which has rendered it in the past, as it also will, I believe, in the future, a fruitful basis for constructive cooperation between us, both as long as the war continues and in the years of peace to come.

Meanwhile, your lordships may have observed that the Germans are actively engaged in stirring up unwarranted suspicions and alarms wherever they can in the Balkans and the Near East in the hope of making those countries the dupes of German policy. But I hope and believe that the peoples of that region, some of whom are not without experience of the methods of the States ranged against us, will not be deceived and will remain steadfast in their loyalty to those principles for which we are fighting, and I am encouraged to think that we are showing ourselves capable of affording assistance and protection to our friends and allies in that part of the world. We shall certainly maintain our efforts, and we shall prosecute the war with the utmost vigour, being confident of the ultimate success of our arms.

DR. REFIK SAYDAM, TURKISH PRIME MINISTER, IN A SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT AT ANKARA, JULY 12:

A FOREIGN Press agency is in the act of publishing a series of documents, among which are documents concerning Turkey. A certain number of newspapers are publishing with the documents propaganda articles based on them.

The issue of correct or false documents can in no way disturb the Turkish people and Government. But your Government would have sincerely desired that this publication should be made without any alteration, for we have such confidence in the correctness and clarity of our policy that such a publication could only confirm this correctness. There is only one reply to those who, on the basis of documents so published, accuse Turkey and try to compromise Turkish statesmen who will not serve their designs. It is to turn away with scorn. Those who make accusations against Turkey and seek to influence her overlook one important point: the Turkey of today is not the dead and rotten Ottoman Empire.

At the time of the Empire such intrigue benefited its authors. But present-day Turkey is a very different country from the Turkey of those days. You will clearly remember that an entire hostile world, with the cooperation of the rulers of that obsolete Empire, once attempted to thwart Ataturk and told the Turkish people that they could not be saved unless they deserted him. But the people clung to Ataturk and took sides with him. If our people, free and independent, is able today to declare its will from this rostrum, it is thanks to that struggle. As a result the maintenance, departure, or replacement of Turkish statesmen can only take place by the decision of the National Assembly.

A second point to emphasize is that the information gathered by these people on the qualities of present Turkish statesmen is false. The present Turkish rulers are not people who pursue a policy favouring such and such a State and boast of such activity. They have only one quality and one programme: the interests of Turkey, the security of the Turkish Republic, accompanied by appropriate friendships. Such are the considerations which were omitted when this propaganda was conceived.

I am going to reply to those who ask what will be Turkey's attitude in the state of affairs in which Europe is at present plunged. Faithful to her friendship, resolved to defend her independence and freedom, united as one single body, Turkey is waiting on events. She is seeking neither to provoke nor to attack her neighbours, and remarks with evident and expected satisfaction that the same sentiments are shared by them. Her sole aim is to safeguard the fatherland and national security.

The Turkish Government, who are working along the lines laid down by the National Assembly, are giving proof of their great desire to uphold the principles which I have just enumerated, and are taking the measures demanded by the exigencies of the hour. The only reply that the Turkish people will give to any act affecting Turkey's independence and the integrity of her territory will consist in taking up arms and defending the fatherland to the end.

VACILLATING POLICIES IN THE BALKANS: AFTER THE FRENCH COLLAPSE

Yugoslavia Signs a Trade Agreement With Russia—Russo-German Rivalry Was Tempered With Discretion—Rumania's Dilemma—Soviet Demands Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina—Carol Vainly Tries to Placate the Axis—Bulgaria's Watchful Neutrality—Metaxas Takes a Firm Line—Turkey's Determined Realism—Russia the Unknown Factor

THE summer of 1940 saw the first steps in the carve-up of the Balkan States and their economic and political subjugation by the Axis Powers. World events beginning with the Nazi invasion of Norway and ending temporarily with the Nazi conquest of the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg and France transformed for the worse the political hold of Britain in the Balkans. The capitulation of France meant the disintegration of the magnificent Allied army held in readiness in Syria under General Weygand to deal with possible Axis aggression. Anglo-French naval superiority in the Mediterranean—a guarantee for some Balkan States against Italian designs—was seriously impaired by the defection of France. In the ruthless and successful use of masses of Nazi 'planes against the Dutch and French civilian populations and armies the Balkan statesmen, except those of Turkey, saw Hitler's terrorization policy justified and reinforced.

Little wonder that both Slav and other peoples of the Balkans began to think that their only hope of averting catastrophe lay in accommodation with Russia or Germany, or with both.

In Yugoslavia this tendency assumed the form of a resumption of diplomatic relations with Russia for the first time since the Great War.

Soviet-Yugoslav Agreement

Further, a Soviet-Yugoslav trade agreement was signed in May, 1940, providing, inter alia, for a trade and navigation treaty based on a "most favoured nation" clause. The Yugoslav peasant assumed hopefully that the State was now assured of Russian support in the event of unjustifiable action by Hitler and Mussolini.

The Rumanians enthusiastically welcomed the appointment of M. Lavrientieff as Soviet Minister at Bucharest. Bulgarian newspapers continued to be largely pro-Russian, and voiced the hope of the Bulgarian peasant that "Big brother Ivan" would prevent a depredatory march into the Balkans.

What was Russia's Balkan policy? Every report of Moscow activities was scrutinized avidly by the diplomats of Belgrade, Sofia, Bucharest and Ankara. When concluding an agreement with Hitler before the outbreak of the war, Stalin had apparently envisaged a conflict between Germany and the Allies in which an exhausting stalemate would develop on the Western Front, permitting Russia to pursue unhindered her diplomatic activities in the Balkans and elsewhere. But, following the collapse of France, this dream was shattered. If Hitler should conquer Britain, in accordance with his advertised plans, he would be able to put on Russia's frontiers the tremendous mechanized forces which he had employed to smash France. Already the Germans were using Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish railways for troop transport. The entrance to the Baltic was in Nazi hands.

Across the rugged Carpathians Red Army soldiers in Russian-occupied Poland could see the cavalry of Admiral Horthy, Regent of Hungary, already more or less under Axis influence. German and Russian soldiers were constructing immense fortifications along their respective frontiers in Poland. Russia, almost encircled by the predatory might of Germany, saw urgent danger. To create defence zones outside Russia's Balkan frontiers became an urgent task, just as had been the case in Poland, the Baltic States and Finland. No more favourable opportunity in the Balkans was likely to occur than during Hitler's preoccupation with his planned invasion of England.

An indication of impending Russo-German rivalry in the Balkans was provided by reports that Moscow had warned Hungary, even while German troops were actively engaged in France, that if Hungary complied with a Nazi



RUSSIAN-YUGOSLAV RAPPROCHEMENT

After the collapse of France certain Balkan countries made an approach to Germany or Russia—or to both. Here—at Belgrade—Lavrientieff (Soviet delegate) is signing a trade agreement with Yugoslavia, whose Foreign Minister, Cincar-Markovich, stands at the left.
Photo, Wide World



TOO LATE RUMANIA AWOKE TO HER PERIL

Menaced by Russian territorial demands, King Carol began to direct Rumanian policy towards placating the Axis. In June he dismissed M. Gafencu (left), and replaced him as Foreign Minister by Gigurtu, known to hold pronounced pro-Nazi views. At the same time the proscribed Iron Guard was restored to favour.

Photos, Keystone ; Planet News

hint and sent troops to occupy Slovakia (thus relieving German divisions required for the Western Front), Russia would take action. A similar warning was reported to have been given to Italy by Russia, lest Mussolini should move against Yugoslavia.

King Carol of Rumania saw the coming danger to his frontiers and made frantic efforts to avert it. Not only Russia but Hungary and Bulgaria were covetous of Rumanian territory. After various Cabinet reshuffles in Bucharest, which did nothing to satisfy the opposing elements in Rumania, King Carol dismissed his pro-Allied Foreign Minister, Gregory Gafencu, and replaced him by Gigurtu, a friend of Field-Marshal Goering, with many other connexions in Germany. Professor Horia Sima, chief of the exiled Iron Guards (Rumanian Fascists) in Germany, was received in audience by King Carol, and the Iron Guard, formerly proscribed in happier times for the Allies, was admitted to a new national party, the "National Union Party." Iron Guard exiles were permitted to return.

Rumania's Dilemma

Following these measures, aimed at enlisting Nazi sympathy for Rumania against possible territorial claims by her neighbours, were decrees prohibiting Rumania's 1,800,000 Jews from joining the new Party, and a Press campaign calling on Rumanians to face the "hard facts that Germany's victory in France and Italy's entry into the war have made this part of Europe a zone of German and Italian influence." But all was of no avail. Early on the morning of June 28, 1940, it was announced in Bucharest that the Soviet Government had demanded the immediate cession of the rich areas of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. A Rumanian counter-proposal asking Russia to name the time and place for conversations was rejected. Stalin was in a hurry, and Red Army soldiers crossed the Dniester post-haste to take over the demanded territory.

It should be noted that while Russia might consider she had a legitimate claim to the province of Bessarabia, which she lost to Rumania in 1918, she justified her seizure of the mountainous and therefore easily defended part of Northern Bukovina in the following statement :

"This act is all the more justified as the handing over of Northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union may be regarded as a compensation, if only an unimportant (sic) one, for the immense loss which the Soviet Union and the population of Bessarabia have suffered through the twenty-two years' rule of Rumania in Bessarabia."

So hurried was the Russian advance that clashes with the retiring Rumanian troops occurred at many points. Some Russians were dropped by parachute from troop-carrying 'planes. Others advanced in 60-ton tanks and armoured cars. As a result of her invasion of Rumania Russia gained a new water defence line in the south—the River Pruth, control of the northern bank of the Danube at one point, and a fine vantage point for a march south to the chief Rumanian oilfields, now only a hundred miles distant.

Russia Retakes Bessarabia

Nor for some days was it certain that the Russians would halt on the appointed new frontier. It was reported that Soviet troops in Bessarabia were showing unusual activity in building pontoon bridges on the left bank of the Pruth, while the most intensive Soviet propaganda campaign for many years was conducted among the masses of Rumanian, Bulgarian and Yugoslav peasants. Stalin was also reported to have concentrated amphibian tanks near the mouth of the Danube.

But now Germany, seriously alarmed by the threat to her Balkan "granary," took a hand. Sensational rumours circulated in Bucharest. One was that



TERRITORY SEIZED BY RUSSIA

On June 28 the Soviet demanded from Rumania the immediate cession of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina (shown here by shaded portions). Stalin's troops at once marched in.





RUSSIA RETAKES BESSARABIA

The former Russian province of Bessarabia, after a short period as an independent republic, came under the sovereignty of Rumania in 1920. When Soviet troops entered at the end of June, 1940, they were welcomed by large crowds (the scene at Kishinev is shown left). But there was an exodus of dispirited Rumanians from the region (top), and a similar flight of German refugees, some of whom are seen below at a German frontier station.

Photos, Associated Press; Wide World; Keystone





KING CAROL ACTS TOO LATE

At the end of May, 1940, Rumania called to the colours 300,000 youths of barely military age. Above, taking the oath at Bucharest. A month later, alarmed by Russian demands for territory, King Carol proclaimed general mobilization; below conscripts are seen on their way to barracks.

Photos, Keystone; E.N.A.



the German Minister Fabricius had left for Vienna to meet Ribbentrop, Nazi Foreign Minister. Another was that 200 German Messerschmitt 'planes had arrived in Rumania. King Carol received the envoys of Germany, Italy, Yugoslavia, and France. While Russian troops continued their march, Rumanian soldiers took up positions in Bucharest; buildings were sandbagged, and defensive works begun in the streets of the capital.

General mobilization began throughout Rumania on June 28, and King Carol was reported to have sent an appeal to Hitler. Carol was alarmed not only by the possibility of a further Soviet advance but also by the growing revisionist campaigns in Hungary and Bulgaria.

A fortnight before the Russian invasion of Rumania Count Teleki and Count Csaky, Hungarian Premier and Foreign Minister respectively, had talks in Munich with Hitler regarding Hungary's claim to Transylvania. They were advised to exercise continued patience. The Soviet action was beginning to be used by the Hungarians as an

argument for the immediate cession of Transylvania, the plea being advanced that Rumania was no longer in a position to defend her frontiers, Hungary began moving troops towards the Transylvanian frontier.

To secure Nazi support against Hungarian and Bulgarian claims, King Carol made further moves to try and ingratiate himself with the Axis and thus secure Italo-German support. Some of these moves were aimed against Britain. On July 1 Rumania officially renounced the Anglo-French guarantee of her frontiers, given in April 1939, and stated that her policy would be re-orientated "as determined by the new European order in course of establishment." Twenty-two British engineers and oil experts were expelled from Rumania. Tatarescu's cabinet resigned on July 4, and a new government was formed under Gigurtu. On July 5 the Rumanian government stated its intention to "follow a policy of sincere integration in the system created by the Rome-Berlin axis."

French and British boats on the Danube were forcibly restrained from leaving their berths. It seemed apparent that all Rumanian (including British) oil tank wagons were being placed at Germany's disposal. Rumania was becoming to all intents and purposes Germany's economic and political slave.

Hitler meanwhile was striving to maintain peace in the Balkans, since only thus could supplies for the Nazi war machine be assured. A veritable trek of Balkan Ministers to Berchtesgaden began. Gigurtu, Prime Minister, and Manoilescu, Foreign Minister, of Rumania, arrived on July 25, and were followed by Filoff and Popoff, their Bulgarian counterparts. After them came Dr. Tiso, President of Slovakia, and Dr. Tuka, his Prime Minister.

On July 24 the Rumanian government took over control of the Astra Romana Oil Company, owned by British and Dutch interests. Britain meantime stated that she supported Bulgaria's claim in regard to the Southern Dobrudja, but only on the assumption that Bulgaria maintained an attitude of strict neutrality towards Germany. On July 29 Britain protested against the virtual expropriation by Rumania of British oil interests.





Associated Press

PLACATING THE FUEHRER

A fortnight before Russia's entry into Rumania, Count Teleki (here seen driving through Munich with Ribbentrop) saw Hitler about Hungary's claims to Transylvania. At the end of July Ribbentrop welcomed to Munich the pro-Nazi Rumanian Premier, M. Gigurtu (top).



THE NAZIFICATION OF RUMANIA

Dr. Fabricius, German Minister at Bucharest, was the architect of Hitler's 'New Order' in the Balkans. How far Russia and Germany had acted in concert was not clear, but about the sacrificial role of unhappy Rumania there could be no doubt.

Photos, E.N.A.; Associated Press

Tension in the Balkans remained acute. Threats were made by Hungary and countered by equally determined assertions by Rumania. Hungarian proposals for the cession of Transylvania were answered by M. Manoilescu with proposals for exchange of minority populations, a more liberal régime for Hungarians remaining in Rumania, and certain territorial concessions.

"We desire it to be known at home and particularly abroad," declared M. Manoilescu, "that events of the kind which Rumania has recently experienced will never be repeated. Rumania knows how to bow before the demands of peace (a reference to Soviet demands), but when certain limits are overstepped Rumania knows how to take another road."

Rumanians of all classes, alarmed by whispers of still further concessions, united in opposition to them. Even the Fascist Iron Guard secretly distributed 10,000 copies of a "No surrender" appeal, calling on Rumanians to awake to the perils of the situation. These brave words were not borne out by events. In effect the partition of Rumania had already been decided on by Hitler. It remained only to put it into execution without causing disturbance to Balkan supplies or offence to Russia. At the Vienna conference between the Axis and Hungarian and Rumanian Foreign Ministers on August 30 (described in a later Chapter), Rumania's sacrificial role in the "New Balkan Order" was finally confirmed.

Meanwhile, extreme nervousness characterized the behaviour of Yugoslavia following the collapse of France and the entry of Italy into the war. German political and economic pressure on Yugoslavia, which was in the unfortunate position of being almost surrounded by hostile neighbours, increased from day to day. Dr. Clodius, Germany's chief economic envoy in the Balkans, asked Dr. Markovich, Yugoslav Foreign Minister, to reconsider the proposal for collective patrol of the Danube by forces of the Danubian States. Another prominent Nazi visitor proposed sending large parties of German youths to coastal watering places in Dalmatia, a suggestion which, in view of Norway's experience with German "tourists," was not received favourably by Yugoslavia.

Axis pressure increased to a point where newspapers no longer ventured to comment on foreign affairs, while Germany insisted that Yugoslavia's minerals, most important of which was copper, should go to Germany instead of to France.

The prestige of the Allies was indeed at its lowest ebb in the Balkans, and Italy contributed her quota by adopting a strongly critical attitude towards Yugoslavia, accusing Dr. Matchek (Croat Leader and Vice-Premier) of associating with British and French "Left" circles.

YUGOSLAVIA RIDES THE STORM

Though in a position of extreme difficulty, Yugoslavia pursued a firm and moderate course, under the leadership of the Regent, Prince Paul. He is here seen (on right) with King Peter at an officers' festival in Belgrade in May, 1940. *Photo, Wide World*





RUMANIAN MINISTERS VISIT ROME

After calling on Hitler (see page 1075) the Rumanian Premier and Foreign Minister went on to Rome to meet Ciano for a discussion of the Hungarian and Bulgarian territorial demands. Here, Gigurtu (foremost) and Manoilescu are seen as they arrived in the Italian capital. Ciano is on Gigurtu's right. *Photo, Wide World*

While quietly reinforcing her frontiers, Yugoslavia continued her negotiations with Russia for a trade agreement. There were even reports that a Yugoslav Military Mission might go to Moscow.

The Nazi invasion of the Low Countries shocked many Bulgarians, especially the use of parachute troops clad in enemy uniforms, the Bulgarians being a fighting people with a strict sense of military honour. For the first time the Press, which had hitherto been inclined to champion Germany's cause, became neutral. Russia as a potential ally against German aims again began to loom large in Bulgarian policy. But the problem of the Southern Dobrudja still rankled, and it was uncertain to what extent Bulgaria might revise her policy in order to obtain Nazi support for her territorial claims on Rumania. Hundreds of German "tourists" and "merchants" continued to arrive in Bulgaria.

Neutral Bulgaria

On August 3 the fourth anniversary of the assumption of government by General Metaxas was celebrated enthusiastically throughout Greece. Italy and Bulgaria were the problems in Greek minds. In spite of a cordial reception accorded by Bulgaria to a Greek trade delegation, Greeks were distrustful of the enormous hold the Germans had acquired in Bulgaria. Some circles considered that Germany's object in providing Bulgaria with modern equipment was to accumulate supplies there in the event of a German push in the Balkans: Bulgarian claims to Aegean Thrace had always been a delicate point with the Greeks.

But General Metaxas allowed no doubt to exist concerning Greece's determination to defend her integrity. In a message to the country he said:

"During the frightful struggle which is now shaking the foundations of Europe, Greece, although prepared to make every sacrifice for the preservation of the integrity of her territory and her honour, still remained neutral, not from motives of selfishness or indifference, but because, having duly considered her strength and means, as well as her geographical position, she was fully conscious that the best service she could render to a stricken Europe was to work for the preservation of peace."

No Balkan country was more affected by the collapse of France and the entry of Italy into the war than Turkey. The first event deprived her of the support of the fine army the French had created in Syria, and substituted a dangerous flank. The second event made it an open question whether Turkey, with hostilities developing in the Mediterranean, was bound to honour her Treaty of Alliance with Britain and France.

The Turks had, of course, to keep a wary eye on Russia, with a view to avoiding, if at all possible, a war on more than one front.

Summing up the general feeling of contempt for Italy's action, one influential Turkish newspaper said:

"The Turks cannot conceive how some people can stab their neighbour's back while he is already dangerously wounded and fighting inexorably to the rising admiration of the world. As for Mussolini's assurances (to Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Switzerland and Egypt), the Turks have before them the horrible plight of countries which trusted such assurances, imprudently relaxing their own armed preparedness. The Turks are not and never will be like them."

While continuing her rearmament programme and voting huge sums for defence, Turkey finally summed up her attitude to Italian intervention in a speech by Dr. Saydam, the Prime Minister, who said that, under Protocol 2 of her Treaty with Britain and France,



SPIRIT OF MUSTAFA KEMAL LIVES ON

With a wary eye on the Axis partners and some uneasiness about Russian intentions, Turkey pushed on with her defence measures, inspired by the spirit of Mustafa Kemal, to whose memory the Turkish ministers gathered to pay homage on the anniversary of the landing at Samsun, May 19, 1919. The party is seen above being welcomed at the burial place of the former President at Ankara. 1, President Inonu; 2, Abdullah Renda, President of Parliament; 3, Refik Saydam, Premier; 4, Revyad Tandogan, Governor of Ankara. *Photo, Wide World*

Turkey could not be compelled to take action involving armed conflict with Russia.

"We hope, by this position of watchfulness and by avoiding any provocation," the Prime Minister added, "that we shall preserve peace for our own country and for those who are around us."

Although full of admiration for Britain's resistance to the Luftwaffe's attacks, Turkey foresaw that the war would be long.

"It will produce still further complications," said the official newspaper "Ulus," "but in proportion as the war develops, the task, the importance and the power of Turkey increase. We can reject with a laugh the predictions of pessimists, cowards and ill-wishers."

At the same time competent Turkish quarters let it be known that Turkey would never permit the installation of a Power other than France in Syria. Above all, Turkey hoped for an understanding between Britain and Russia as the key to the Balkan situation. The hope was expressed that the visit of Sir Stafford Cripps, Britain's new envoy to Moscow, would be crowned with success.

Turkey and Syria

So long as Soviet Russia was suspicious of Britain's aims, especially in so far as they might result in the entry into the Black Sea of Allied warships, the Turks, as guardians of the Dardanelles, were in a delicate position in regard to coming to the aid of the democracies. They considered that the collapse of France, leaving Britain preoccupied with her own defence, would at least contribute to the allaying of Soviet suspicions in this respect.

Turkish relations with Nazi Germany continued meanwhile steadily to deteriorate. The action of the German official news agency in publishing documents alleged to have been found by the Germans in France, imputing aggressive Turkish intentions towards Russia in alliance with France, caused great bitterness. "The documents," said Dr. Saydam, "do nothing more than prove that Turkey has always followed a sincere and loyal policy." Although Russia showed some ill-feeling towards Turkey as a result of these documents, it was apparent, from Soviet action against Rumania, that Stalin was concerned first of all with securing his frontiers against Nazi Germany, whose might had increased with her new conquests.

Whether Stalin and Hitler would get together to dominate the Balkans jointly was a question which only the future could answer. The Turks, however, were hopeful that Russian policy in this respect would follow that of the Tsars, and would work towards excluding any Great Power (which meant Germany or Italy) from a hold on the shores of the Black Sea or from exercising a dominating influence on the Power controlling the approaches to it.



BULGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

In the hands of Ivan Popoff, former Minister to Belgrade, rested the conduct of Bulgaria's foreign policy during the troublous summer months of 1940. Increasingly heavy pressure was exerted at Sofia by the Nazis. *Photo, Wide World*



WHERE UNION JACK FLEW SIDE BY SIDE WITH SWASTIKA

Bulgaria's foreign policy during the summer of 1940 was based on the maintenance of strict neutrality, though she did not in any way abate her claims to her former territory in the Dobrudja, of which she had twice been deprived. Here is a scene in Sofia at the end of May, 1940, showing the streets dressed impartially with Axis and Allied flags for a Bulgarian national festival.

Photo, Associated Press



KISHINEV GIVES A WELCOME TO THE RED ARMY

Photo, Wide World

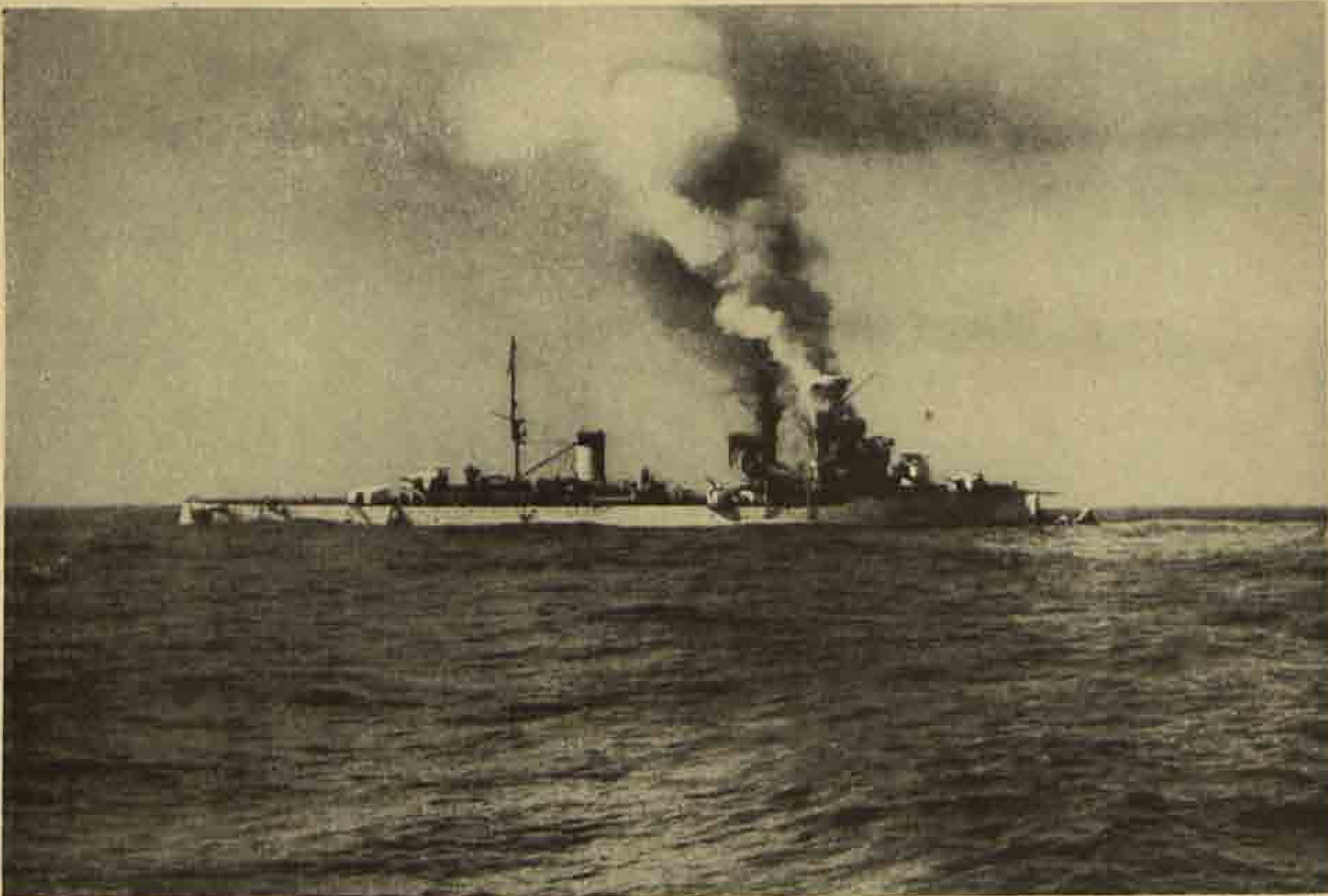
After Soviet troops had completed the occupation of Bessarabia and Bukovina at the end of June, 1940, mass demonstrations were staged by the Red Army in the principal towns. This photo shows the scene in Kishinev, Bessarabia, as mechanised units of the Russian army drove through on July 3. Twenty years had passed since the province had ceased to be part of Russia. Another scene in Kishinev during the Russian entry is shown in page 1073.



Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

HOW THE 'GALILEO GALILEI' CAME TO ADEN

On June 19, 1940, the Admiralty trawler 'Moonstone' attacked and captured the Italian submarine 'Galileo Galilei' off Aden. Depth charges brought the enemy to the surface, and she was then outfought by Boatswain W. J. H. Moorman and his crew of the trawler and compelled to surrender. In this photograph the British flag is being hoisted above the Italian one while the submarine lies in Aden harbour. Mr. Moorman was later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and recommended for promotion to lieutenant. (See also illus. page 1093)



FIRST STRAIGHT FIGHT BETWEEN BRITISH AND ITALIAN WARSHIPS

Here is Italy's fastest and most powerful cruiser, 'Bartolomeo Colleoni,' lying stopped with her bow shot away by accurate fire from the guns of H.M.A.S. 'Sydney.' Encountered off Crete on the morning of July 19, 1940, she was hit in her vitals and brought to a halt by the Australian cruiser, and her destruction was completed by British destroyers soon after this photograph was secured. Both cruisers were armed with 6-inch guns, but the Italian warship was some five or six knots faster than H.M.A.S. 'Sydney.'

THE SEA AFFAIR: NAVAL OPERATIONS DURING JUNE AND JULY, 1940

Why Britain Occupied Iceland and the Faroes—Naval Aspect of the Evacuation from the Channel Ports—Withdrawal from Norway—Position in the Mediterranean: Tasks of the Fleet—Italy's Battleships, Old and New—The Trawler 'Moonstone'—Armistice in the West—Hunting of the 'Scharnhorst'—A Brush in the Mediterranean—'Sydney' Outfights the 'Bartolomeo Colleoni'—The 'Meknès' Outrage—'Alcantara' and a Commerce Raider

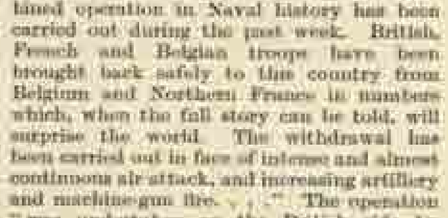
THE British occupation of the Faroe Islands (announced on April 11, 1940) and of Iceland (on May 10, 1940) were necessary steps after Denmark had yielded to the Nazis. Although subsequently, under the increasing pressure on the Western Front, Allied forces had to be withdrawn from Norway, Britain's hold on Iceland and the Faroes was maintained. Iceland declared herself independent of Denmark, and asserted her neutrality in the conflict. Especially in view of aerial warfare, the strategic position of this island in the North Atlantic was of prime importance.

As related in Chapters 89 and 90, the Channel ports one after another fell into German hands at the end of May, 1940. Boulogne was occupied on the 24th, our troops being got away by sea the night before. Six destroyers brought off 4,600 men under heavy fire and intense bombardment. Vice-Admiral Ramsay was the organizer of this operation. From Calais, whose Allied defenders refused to surrender and fought to the death, only thirty unwounded men were evacuated. The Citadel, into which the gallant band had withdrawn to make their final stand, was taken by the enemy on May 28. Just before this last phase a British destroyer had landed a reconnaissance party, including Vice-Admiral Somerville (see page 907).

The evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk and the later withdrawal of the remainder of our forces from the more westerly French ports overshadow, of course, other naval events at the period under review. In Chapters 89, 90 and 92, dealing with land and aerial warfare at this time, a brief account is given of the part played by the Royal Navy, its Auxiliaries and the hundred-and-one other craft in the magnificent operations which brought back safely 335,000 of our men from France. In the present Chapter the purely Naval aspect of that task will be considered. In an official communiqué dated June 3, 1940, the Admiralty stated:

Enemy in Channel Ports

"The most extensive and difficult combined operation in Naval history has been carried out during the past week. British, French and Belgian troops have been brought back safely to this country from Belgium and Northern France in numbers which, when the full story can be told, will surprise the world. The withdrawal has been carried out in face of intense and almost continuous air attack, and increasing artillery and machine-gun fire. . . ." The operation "was undertaken on the British side by



CLOSING THE IRISH SEA

As a counter-measure against Nazi raiders from across the Channel, the Irish Sea was closed to the south at the end of July, 1940, by a minefield, as shown in this map.

Courtesy of "News Chronicle"

several flotillas of destroyers and a large number of small craft of every description. This force was rapidly increased, and a total of 222 British Naval vessels and 665 other British craft and boats took part. . . . These figures do not include large numbers of French naval and merchant ships which also played their part."

There were 300 French warships and merchant vessels, with 200 smaller craft.

By means of a Registration Order for small craft the Admiralty had collected details of all likely vessels available in all areas; and when the order for assembly was given these boats made their way to Southern ports ready to bring the troops right across the Channel, or to ferry them from the fire-swept Dunkirk beaches to the transports lying a mile out from the shore. Except at certain states of the tide it was impossible for any but shallow-draft vessels to approach nearer.

The Navy at Dunkirk

Naval units protected the flanks of the withdrawal by gunfire, and there was persistent counter-battery work directed against enemy artillery near the coast, which kept the rescuing vessels under constant shell-fire. By use of his submarines and the new motor torpedo-boats the enemy sought further to destroy our ships. Over and above all these hazards was the one on which the Nazis had based their hopes of exterminating our hard-pressed soldiers—annihilation by massed aerial attack. But the new weapon and the new method of warfare proved ineffective in the face of the powerful offensive-defence put up by our Air Force and the vigorous measures adopted by our Naval units. The communiqué cited went on to say:

"The losses sustained by our Naval forces have been comparatively small. The loss of H.M. Destroyers 'Grafton' (Cmdr. C. E. C. Robinson, R.N.), 'Grenade' (Cmdr. R. C. Boyle, R.N.), and 'Wakeful' (Cmdr. R. L. Fisher, R.N.) was announced on May 30. H.M. Destroyers 'Basilisk' (Cmdr. M. Richmond, R.N.), 'Keith' (Capt. E. L. Berthon, R.N.) and 'Havant' (Lt.-Cmdr. A. F. Burnell-Nugent, R.N.) have also been sunk by enemy action. Of more than 170 minor war vessels of H.M. Fleet engaged in the operation, 24 have been lost."

H.M. Destroyer "Keith" was sunk on June 1, off Dunkirk. The German bombers came over in a line, and the destroyer was hit and took on a bad list. Then, in the words of a survivor:

"We were told to prepare to abandon the ship and take to the boats. We kept the A.A. gun going all the time, and as the ship was going down our fellows were still firing the pom-poms. Unfortunately most of our boats had been wrecked in the attack, and most of us had to take to the water. I swam away and managed to get on to a raft, where several others joined me later. The Germans hadn't done with us yet, though, for they came back while a tug was taking the men off the forecastle. They bombed the tug, and all the men on it had to swim for it and got picked up again. Some climbed on to a wreck, but the Germans saw them and came and bombed them there, too."







'KELLY' GETS BACK TO PATROL

One evening in May, 1940, the flotilla leader 'Kelly,' commanded by Cmdr. Lord Louis Mountbatten (top, right), was torpedoed and badly damaged by a German E-boat while hunting a submarine off the enemy coast. Above, she is seen with a heavy list on the following day, with men being transferred to another destroyer. She was taken in tow by the destroyer 'Bulldog' and, though repeatedly attacked by aircraft and menaced by submarines, was brought to a British repair yard after being 91 hours in tow or hove-to. 'Kelly' was repaired and refitted, and the photograph at left shows her a few months later again on patrol.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Fox; Cannons

Some idea of the variety of Naval craft engaged is given by an analysis of the twenty-four casualties referred to. They comprised 1 Fleet minesweeper; 1 gunboat; 1 Fleet Air Arm tender; 5 [later corrected to 4] paddle minesweepers and one other—these were pleasure steamers from London and seaside resorts; 8 trawlers; 3 drifters; 1 dan-laying vessel (a "dan" is a trawler's buoy); 2 armed boarding vessels; and 1 tug. During covering operations Zeebrugge was blocked by ships filled with concrete, and the sea gates of the canal were demolished. (See page 917.)

An account of one facet of the evacuation, by a Naval eye-witness, was issued on June 1. He said:

"All day Thursday (May 30) I spent at the South Coast base where the ships that brought the Army off came and went. For days and nights there had been a continuous stream to and fro of transports and destroyers, sloops and trawlers, coming back crammed to their utmost capacity with men .... They embarked thousands from beaches, men wading out to their armpits to reach the boats. They embarked tens of thousands from piers and jetties, beating off the German bombers with their guns while the troops climbed on board. ... I was on board a destroyer in the afternoon that had just come back from the beaches. She had had 52 bombs dropped over her and she had lost her captain, but she came back crammed to capacity. They had only one boat, a whaler, to bring them off. The other boats were splintered and out of action."

He sailed in another destroyer about midnight. They wriggled a way through minefields until they neared Dunkirk, and about 3 a.m., in the middle of the swept channel, they bumped some wreckage and fouled one of the propellers. Unable for the time being to clear the propeller, the captain crept ahead on the remaining engine as far as the harbour entrance. Here they lay-to and explained the position by signal lamp to the Admiral in Dunkirk. Later they got the order, "Enter harbour forthwith."

Destroyer at Dunkirk

"Right," said the captain rather grimly. "I suppose it is better to enter Heaven maimed and with one propeller than to stop outside." They went in alongside the mole, where thousands of men of the B.E.F. were patiently waiting for embarkation. It was nearly low water, and the top of the mole was level with the destroyer's bridge. They filled up despite bombers overhead and German shells bursting with methodical regularity at the end of the mole but hitting nobody. With every inch of space on deck and below crammed with men the ship went out and made her way back to safety.

On June 4 the Admiralty sent out a signal congratulating all concerned in the evacuation. Their Lordships appreciated

"the splendid endurance with which all ships and personnel faced the continuous attack of enemy aircraft and the physical strain imposed by long hours of arduous work in narrow waters over many days. The ready willingness with which seamen from every









IN ICELAND THE NAZIS WERE FORESTALLED

Soon after the German occupation of Denmark on April 9, 1940, British troops landed in the Faroes; above, men of the Royal Marines are seen at Thórshavn, capital of the largest island. Iceland (see inset map) was taken under British control on May 16, and the top photograph shows our warships in Reykjavik harbour. The broadcasting station was put under close guard (left), and soon big guns (below) were mounted for the defence of this important island.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Sport & General; Black Star



walk of life came forward to assist their brother seamen of the Royal Navy will not readily be forgotten. Their Lordships also realize that success was only rendered possible by the great effort made by all shore establishments, and in particular by the Dover Command who were responsible for the organization and direction of this difficult operation."

Admiral Abrial, the French naval officer in command of French forces in the Dunkirk area, left the doomed port as the last French and British vessels were themselves starting. Reaching Dover in the early hours of June 4, he met the First Sea Lord and other high Naval officers and was later received in private audience by the King. On June 15 it was learnt that the Admiral had been awarded an Hon. K.C.B.

By the German defeat of France, Britain was faced with that threatening situation which in the past had been depicted as a calamity to be avoided at all costs: a hostile Power in possession of the other side of the Channel. Even before the advent of air warfare such an event had been regarded as one fraught with extreme peril. How much more deadly was it now, when the aerial legions of the Nazis were based only some score of miles from our shores at the nearest point. The entire position, military as well as naval and aerial, was altered. But, in the months that were to follow, the menace faded into the distance and the life of Britain went on much the same as before.

Menacing Situation

Necessary precautions were immediately taken. As from June 8 no merchant vessel was to approach within three miles of the coasts of the United Kingdom between sunset and sunrise except in an organized British convoy. But vessels on passage might use a recognized coastal channel where this encroached on the three-mile limit.



HE DIED SERVING HIS GUN

Leading Seaman Jack F. Mantle, of H.M.S. 'Foylebank,' a 5,600-ton motor ship, had his leg shattered by a bomb during a Nazi aerial attack on July 4, 1940. He continued to serve his pom-pom, and when electric power failed he worked it by hand, despite further grievous injuries received later. He was posthumously awarded the V.C.

Photo, G.P.U.

The loss of the former Cunard White Star liner "Carinthia" (20,277 tons) in a gallant fight with a German submarine was announced on June 8. She had been converted into an armed merchant cruiser and was commanded by Capt. J. F. B. Barrett, R.N. Two officers and two ratings were killed, but the rest of her complement were rescued.

On this same date there was a terse Admiralty announcement that there had been contact between British and German naval forces in northern waters. The entry of Italy into the war on the side of Germany was impending—she declared war on June 10—and it was obvious that what with this risk and the steadily worsening situation in France some fresh disposition of our land and sea forces would be inevitable. It was none the less a grievous disappointment to Britons when the Ministry of Information gave the news on June 10 that Allied troops had been withdrawn from Northern Norway. The Admiralty announced, moreover, that the following ships must be presumed lost: the aircraft carrier "Glorious" (22,500 tons), the destroyers "Acasta" and "Ardent," the transport "Orama" (an Orient liner, 19,840 tons), and a tanker (see illus., page 1065). Thus closed an unhappy venture in the war, marked by many heroic episodes and entered upon with high hopes. Next day aircraft of our Coastal Command scored hits on two cruisers and a transport in the harbour at Trondheim.

In another raid on Trondheim harbour, two days later—this time by Fleet Air Arm 'planes—the German battleship "Scharnhorst" was hit.

The Admiralty announced the laying of extensive minefields in the Mediterranean (June 11), by which the Italian coasts with those of Albania and Libya were hedged in.

The gallant little Polish submarine "Orzel," which had escaped from internment at Tallinn and made her way to a British port early in the war, was given up as lost on June 12. She had seen active service with British Naval units after her daring flight from Estonia (see page 115).

On June 13, 1940, the British armed merchant cruiser "Scotstoun" (17,000 tons) was torpedoed and sunk in the North Atlantic by a U-boat. The first torpedo shattered the steering gear and screws and also wrecked the aerial. Another aerial was rigged and the radio operator was able to dispatch a code message for help. Then came a second torpedo, which completed the destruction. The ship heeled over and the gunners were soon waist-deep in water, but they went on serving the guns. "Abandon ship" was ordered, and one after the other the gun crews went to their boat stations or

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SUBMARINE 'SEAL'

Many months after an Admiralty announcement, on May 13, 1940, that H.M. Submarine 'Seal' was overdue and must be presumed lost, there came news from enemy sources that the vessel had been captured by aircraft and motor boats while attempting to enter the Baltic. This German photograph purports to show a Nazi crew taking over the refitted submarine

Photo, Associated Press



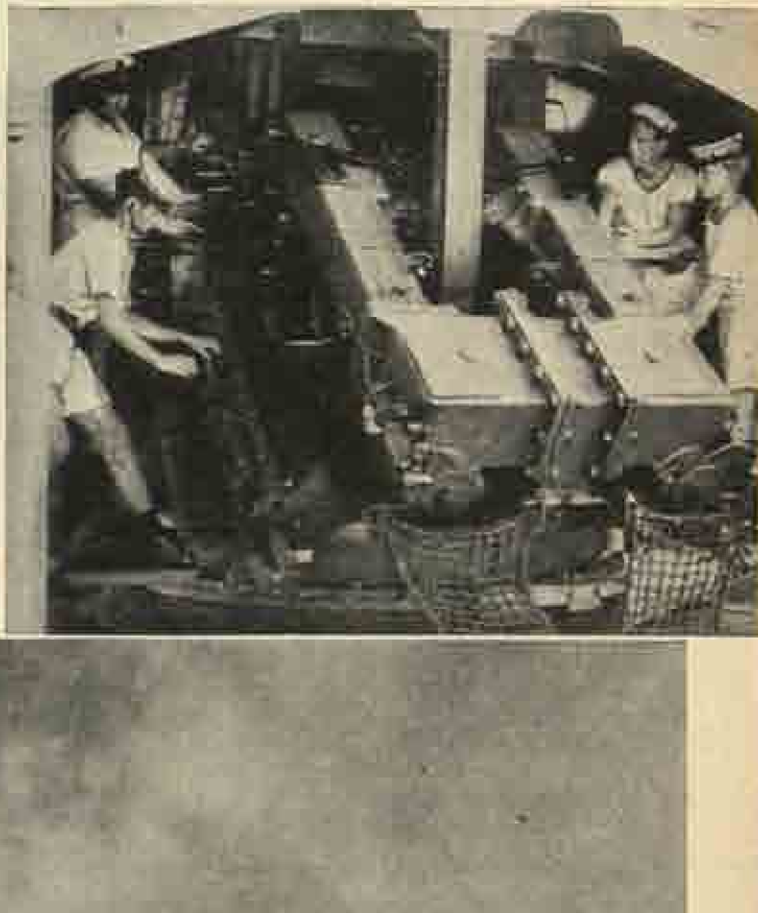


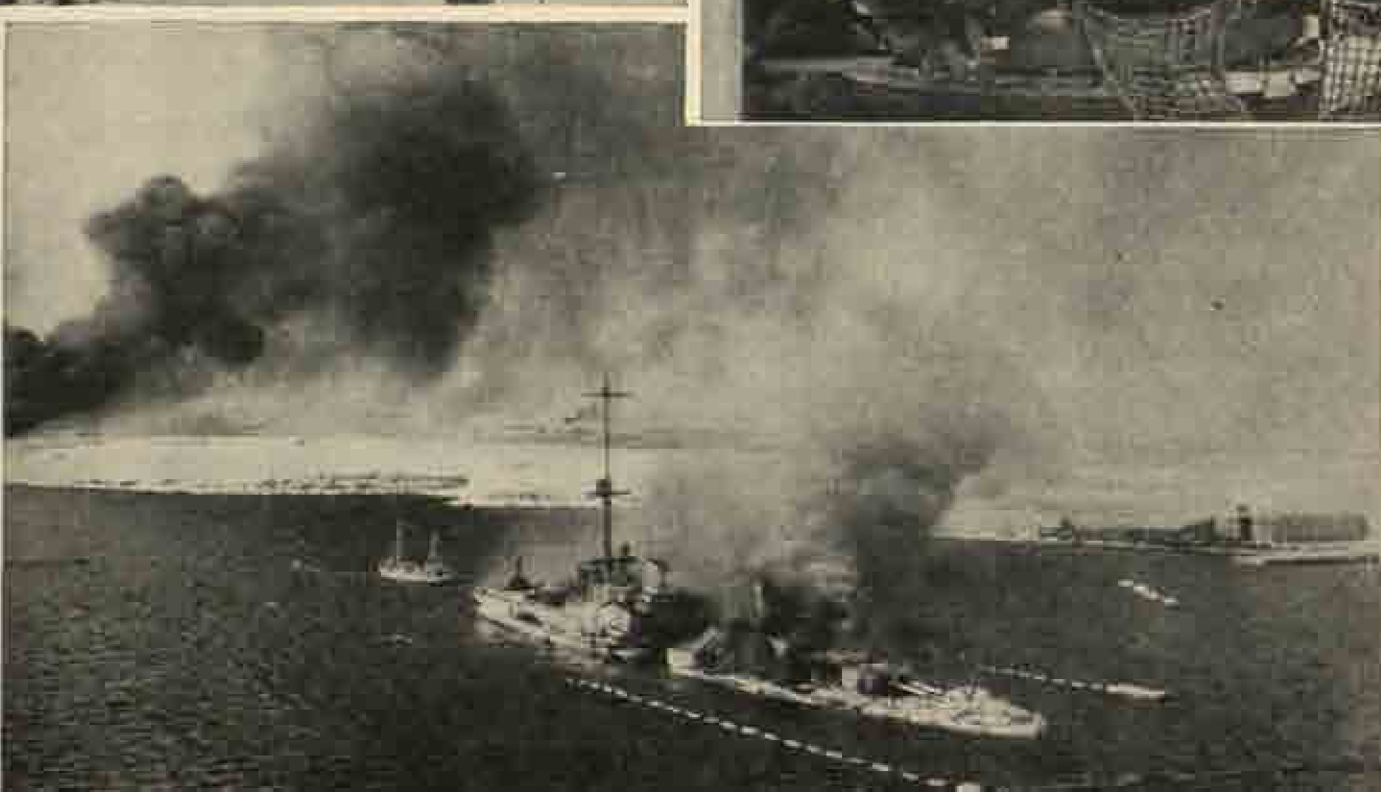


SWIFT REPRISAL TO THE 'STAB IN THE BACK'

British Naval units and aircraft shelled and bombed Tobruk on June 12, 1940, setting on fire the Italian cruiser 'San Giorgio' (seen at foot of page, ablaze after a further attack during the capture of Tobruk on January 21, 1941). Top three photographs show a British cruiser shelling Bardia soon after Italy entered the war; other cruisers on the way to Bardia; and a gun crew at work.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright





slid over the side on to rafts. But the stern high-angle gun went on to the end, with the corpses of two of its crew washing about in the waves at its base. At length that gun stopped, and the survivors joined officers and others on the bridge. Eventually this little band went over the side and was picked up.

The rapid advance of the German armies through France soon brought other ports under enemy control: St. Nazaire (June 17), Cherbourg (June 18), Brest (June 20), St. Malo and Lorient (June 22). At each there was an evacuation of British troops and material, followed by the destruction of anything of benefit to the enemy. The story is told in Chapter 97. During one of such tasks the Canadian destroyer "Fraser" was lost in collision off Bordeaux (see photograph, page 999). At St. Nazaire occurred the major disaster in which the troopship "Lancastria" (former Cunarder) was sunk on June 17 by a dive-bombing attack, with the loss of some 2,000 lives (photographs in page 998).

The course of events in the Mediterranean region must now be glanced at. British shipping had been excluded from the Mediterranean since May 1, so that our Navy was freed from the onerous duty of shepherding merchant vessels in those waters. We had maintained a strong Fleet at Alexandria for many months. It was under the command of Sir Andrew Cunningham, who had taken the necessary steps to counter any likely action by the Italians, if and when they came into the war. The task of this Fleet was to protect Egypt and the Suez Canal, and to harass the flank of an Italian force advancing from Libya along the coastal road that it must take. Further, there was the oil line terminal at Haifa to be safeguarded. And over and above all these was the need to seek out and destroy the enemy fleet.

On paper, Italy had a strong showing, with four battleships of the Littorio class (35,000 tons, armed with nine 15-inch guns); four rebuilt battleships of the Cavour class (22,500 tons, armed with ten 12·6-inch guns); seven battle-cruisers of 10,000 tons; 28 light cruisers; 144 destroyers and torpedo-boats; 133 submarines; and 106 motor torpedo-boats. But the Cavour class battleships dated from 1911–13 and had been drastically reconstructed during the years 1933–1937; they were lengthened by some 80 feet, the centre turret done away with, and their existing 12-inch guns rebored to 12·6-inch calibre. New engines and boilers gave them an extra six knots, making the nominal speed 27.

Of the newer battleships only two had been completed, "Littorio" and "Vittorio Veneto." They were said to be the last word in warship construction, and probably had a speed of 31 knots. The Cavour class vessels were an unknown quantity; and besides these considerations were those of morale and high policy. How far would Mussolini risk his fleet in active warfare? British naval and air units raided





POLISH SAILORS WHO FOUGHT FOR BRITAIN

The Polish submarine "Orzel" (first officer, Lieut. Andrew Piasecki, left) was given up as lost on June 12, 1940. Escaping from internment at Tallinn in September, 1939, the "Orzel" made her way to Britain and joined our Fleet. Later she was engaged in the Kattegat and Skagerrak operations, and sank German transports. The photograph shows the return of the submarine from these exploits.

Photos, Sport & General

Tobruk on June 11, when the Italian cruiser "San Giorgio" and two submarines were hit and set on fire. After this the enemy cruiser did not venture forth again, but remained at Tobruk apparently as a guardship. Enemy submarines drew first blood on June 13 by sinking H.M.S. "Calypso," a light cruiser of 4,180 tons. One officer and nearly 40 ratings were reported missing. On the 15th the Admiralty reported the sinking of four Italian submarines in the Mediterranean. On June 22 there came the announcement of brilliant work by H.M. Trawler "Moonstone," operating in the Gulf of Aden. She

"was on patrol . . . when the periscope of a submerged submarine was sighted. The trawler at once attacked with depth charges. These brought the submarine to the surface. The submarine engaged the trawler with her entire armament, consisting of torpedoes, two 3·9-inch guns and smaller guns. The trawler replied with her 4-inch and a Lewis gun, and scored hits on the submarine with 4-inch shells. The submarine subsequently surrendered and was brought into Aden as a prize."

The captain and several officers of the submarine were killed; three officers and 37 ratings were taken prisoner.

H.M. "Moonstone" was commanded by Boatswain W. J. H. Moorman, R.N., who was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and selected to undergo the necessary courses for promotion to the rank of lieutenant. From Mr. Moorman's report it was possible to add further details to the story. The submarine was the "Galileo Galilei," of 1,231 tons, armed with two 3·9-inch guns. Contact was made with her soon after 11.30 a.m. by means of the trawler's Asdic apparatus, and later she was attacked with depth charges. At 12.30 p.m. she appeared on the surface dead astern at a range of about a mile and steaming in the opposite direction to that of the "Moonstone." Turning at once the trawler started to chase, opening fire with her 4-inch gun; the second round hit and burst inside the submarine's conning tower.

The enemy returned the fire, but the "Moonstone" closed to within half a

mile and, by a heavy fire from Lewis guns, drove the Italian gunners away from their own 3·9s. Some of the trawler's men kept up a slow and deliberate sniping fire with rifles. Another hit with the 4-inch gun was scored on the enemy, and the range closed rapidly. After two more hits on their conning tower, the Italians hauled down their flag.

Another Italian submarine was destroyed about this time by our light Naval forces operating in the East Indies.

Italy lost six more underwater craft before the month was out: two in the East Indies and four in the Mediterranean. A communiqué of June 29 also disclosed that an Italian destroyer had been sunk in the Mediterranean.

In the western theatre of war Marshal Pétain's announcement, on June 17, that he had approached Hitler with a request for an armistice brought immediate problems for the Naval Command. What was to become of the French Fleet, a large part of which was at Alexandria, where it had been co-operating with our own? And what also would be the position with regard to France's ports on the Channel and the Atlantic? An armistice with Germany was signed on June 22, and one between France and Italy two days later. The text is printed in pages 1018–19. The French Fleet, excepting that part left free for the safeguarding of French interests in the Colonial Empire, was to be collected in ports to be specified and there demobilized and disarmed under German or Italian control.

Mr. Churchill, speaking in Parliament on June 25, 1940 (*see* Historic Documents, No. 150, in page 1002), said that it was with grief and amazement that he read these terms. "The safety of Great Britain and the British Empire," he said, "is powerfully, though not decisively, affected by what happens to the French Fleet."

A few days later the British Government took drastic steps to protect British interests and ensure that many of the French vessels should not fall into enemy hands. These operations are dealt with in Chapter 105. There are certain other Naval activities during the latter half of June which must be mentioned. A third armed merchant cruiser fell a victim to the U-boats, this vessel being the former Cunard White Star liner "Andania," whose loss was announced on June 20, together with the presumed loss of H.M. Trawler "Juniper." On June 22 further attacks were made by air and by submarine on the German battleship "Scharnhorst" in the North Sea, while she was on her way from Trondheim to a German port for repairs. The enemy was hit by three aerial bombs and was torpedoed by H.M. Submarine "Clyde." To make the story complete we may anticipate by a few days and record how on July 1, the battleship was located at Kiel and there heavily bombed again—this time by 'planes of the Coastal Command. She was set on fire. On June 28 the Admiralty announced



THE HUNTING OF THE 'SCHARNHORST'

The German battleship 'Scharnhorst' (see illus., p. 820) was bombed by the Fleet Air Arm in Trondheim harbour on June 13, 1940. Nine days later she was torpedoed by the submarine 'Clyde' (below) in the North Sea and again bombed. On July 1 she was located at Kiel and attacked by aircraft of the Coastal Command, being set on fire. The aerial photograph above shows (1) the 'Scharnhorst' in floating dock at Kiel, undergoing repair; (2) the pocket battleship 'Lützow' in dry dock while her stern is being repaired; (3) a Hipper class cruiser with (4) a Köln class cruiser, in the Germania yard for repair or refit.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Sport & General









NAVAL LOSSES IN THE EVACUATION OF NARVIK

When the grave situation in France made it imperative to withdraw Allied forces from Narvik early in June, 1940, a perilous task with very adverse odds was imposed on our Navy in Northern waters. The destroyers 'Acasta' (left) and 'Ardent' were lost in this operation, and with them the aircraft carrier 'Glorious,' here seen in Norwegian waters shortly before her end.

Photos, Wright & Logan; Associated Press

that H.M. Submarine "Tetrarch" had sunk an enemy supply ship off Norway.

On July 2 the Blue Star liner "Arandora Star" was torpedoed by a German submarine off the west coast of Ireland while on voyage to Canada with about 1,500 German and Italian subjects who had been interned in Britain and were being sent to an internment camp oversea. The vessel was well-known to thousands of Britishers as a cruise-liner. Largely owing to the fact that they fought among themselves to get to the lifeboats, 470 Italians and 143 Germans lost their lives. The U-boat was said to have been commanded by Captain Prien, who had torpedoed the "Royal Oak" in Scapa Flow on October 14, 1939. (*See* illus. pp. 244 and 245.)

H.M. Submarine "Snapper," the Admiralty announced on July 7, had torpedoed five German ships in convoy. This submarine (670 tons) was commanded by Lt. W. D. A. King, who had been awarded the D.S.O. for exploits during the Norwegian campaign. Next day came the news of the loss of the British destroyer "Whirlwind" (V-class, 1,100 tons), sunk by a U-boat. Her commander was Lt.-Cmdr. J. M. Rodgers, R.N. Survivors were picked up by another of His Majesty's ships.

Things began to liven up in the Mediterranean, and on July 9 there occurred a brush with the Italians in the Ionian Sea which our Commander-in-Chief described as a "disappointing action"; one enemy cruiser was hit by a torpedo from our naval aircraft, but the Italian vessels made off at high speed and could not be brought to close-range combat. The Italian official communiqué admitted that one naval unit—presumably a capital ship—had been hit by a 15-inch shell; also that the destroyer "Zeffiro" had been sunk. In another part of the Mediterranean H.M. Submarine "Parthian" (Lt.-Cmdr. M. C. Rimington, R.N.) sank an Italian submarine. During the operations off Calabria on the 9th, it was later disclosed, 20 Italian aircraft had been shot down. On this same day a British Naval formation based on Gibraltar carried out a sweep towards the Central Mediterranean and destroyed four enemy aircraft, besides badly damaging three others. It began to emerge that our warships had little to fear from the air activities of the Italian Regia Aeronautica.

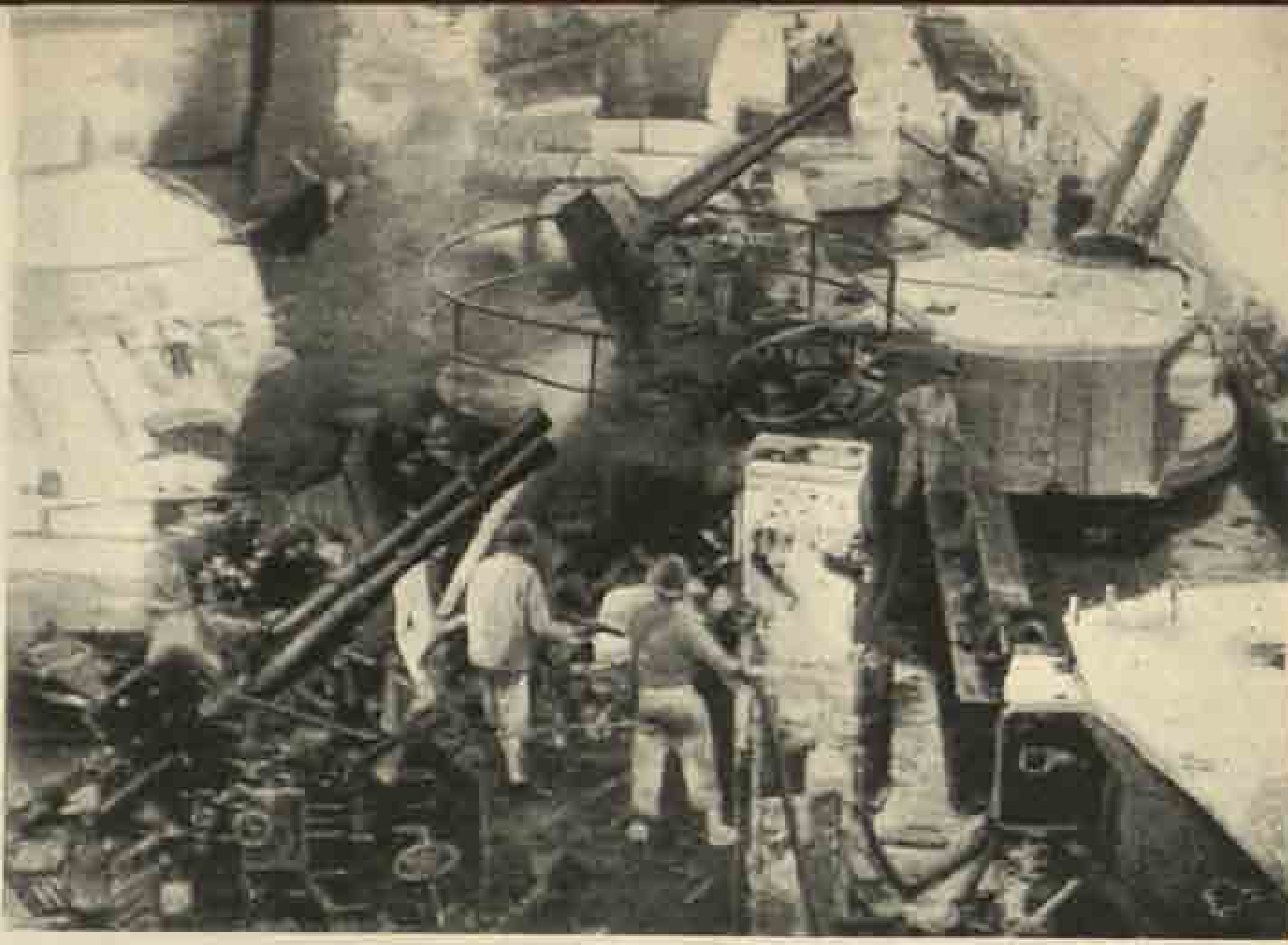
H.M. "Shark," another of our dare-devil submarines, failed to report and was "presumed lost" (July 15). Commanded by Lt.-Cmdr. P. N. Buckley, R.N., she was a sister ship of "Snapper."

Armed Trawlers Lost

On the 14th the loss of H.M. Destroyer "Escort" in the Western Mediterranean was announced. Other naval casualties about this time were the destroyer "Imogen," sunk as the result of a collision during fog; and the Admiralty trawler "Rinovia," lost by air attack after shooting down one enemy 'plane (July 10). Another trawler that fell a victim to enemy air attack was H.M. "Crestflower," whose loss was reported on July 21. At the same time the announcement was made that the submarine "Salmon" was considerably overdue. Under the command of Commander Bickford, R.N., D.S.O., she had torpedoed the "Leipzig" and another enemy cruiser in the North Sea (December 14, 1939).

The loss of the destroyer "Brazen" was made known on July 22. Attacked by a large number of Nazi bombers, she shot down three before being herself put out of action. Under tow by another destroyer, H.M. "Brazen" sank before reaching port. Her captain, Lt.-Cmdr. Sir Michael Culme-Seymour, and all the complement were rescued.

In an encounter off Crete on the morning of July 19 Italy lost her fastest cruiser, the "Bartolomeo Colleoni" (5,070 tons). Our patrols in the Aegean, consisting of the Australian cruiser "Sydney" (Capt. J. A. Collins, R.A.N.) and some destroyers, came into contact with two Italian cruisers of the Colleoni class about 7.30 a.m. The enemy was first sighted by our destroyers and altered his course westwards, endeavouring to escape. H.M.A.S. "Sydney" arrived in support about an hour later and scored vital hits on the "Bartolomeo Colleoni" (*see* photograph in page 1082). Profiting by this our destroyers were soon able to complete the destruction of the enemy. The other Italian warship—the "Giovanni delle Bande Nere"—was hit, but was saved

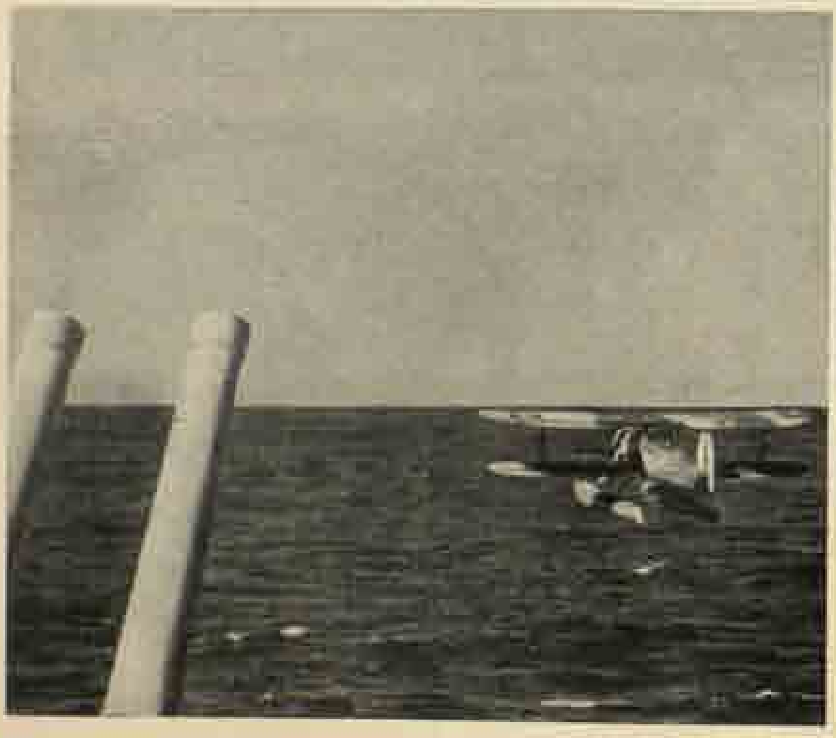




'DISAPPOINTING ACTION' IN THE IONIAN SEA

The map opposite illustrates successive stages in what the British C.-in-C. termed a 'disappointing action,' fought on July 9, 1940. One Italian capital ship was hit by a 15-inch shell from a British battleship, and an Italian cruiser was torpedoed by our Naval aircraft. The enemy made off at speed and thus escaped destruction. Above, the scene on one of the enemy warships after a direct hit from a British shell; below, right, another photograph from enemy sources shows a salvo being fired from an Italian battleship. On the left a British seaplane flies off to observe for the guns.

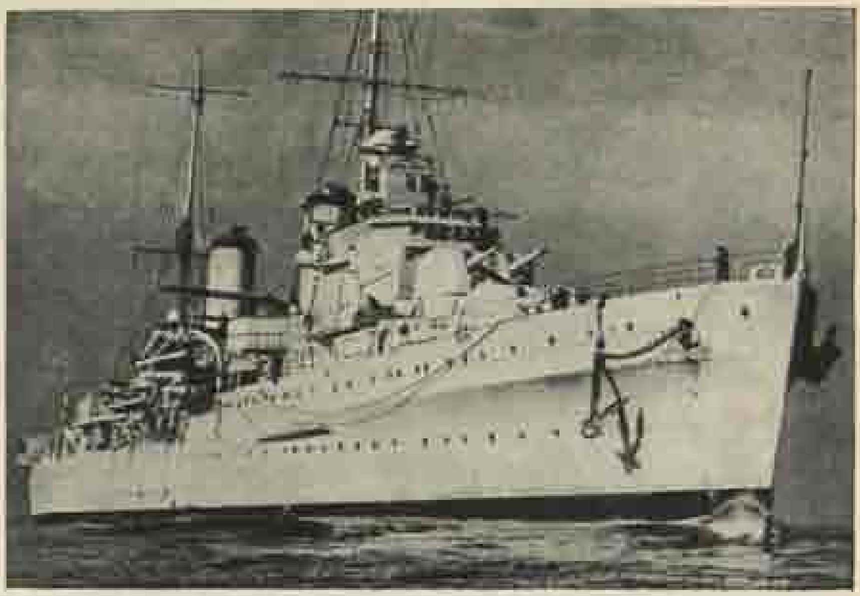
Photos, Associated Press; Central Press; Keystone







Captain J. A. Collins, R.A.N., commanded the Australian cruiser 'Sydney' (right) in the action off Crete on July 19, 1940, when she outfought the 'Bartolomeo Colleoni.' He was awarded the C.B.







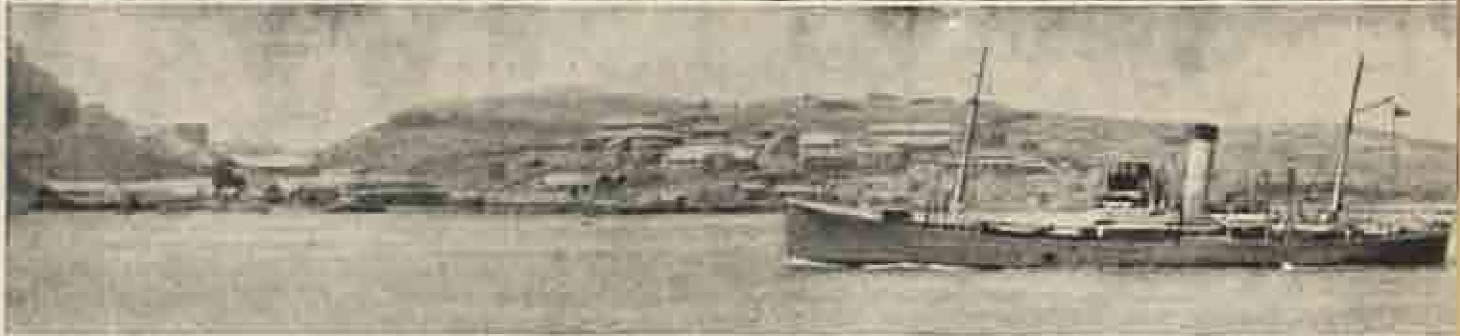
NAVY SHOWS MERCY TO A VANQUISHED FOE

Brought to a halt by the accurate gunfire of H.M.A.S. 'Sydney' (see the striking photograph in page 1084), the Italian cruiser 'Bartolomeo Colleoni' was then finished off by our destroyers (senior officer, Cmdr. Hugh St. L. Nicholson, D.S.O., R.N., right, who was awarded a bar to his D.S.O.). Well over 500 survivors were picked up; above, some are seen swimming amid the wreckage of their ship; on the left are Italian sailors being helped up the side of the 'Sydney.'

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Associated Press; Topical Press







from a like fate only by her superior speed. Our ships rescued 545 from the sinking vessel, including her captain, Umberto Navaro, who died later in Alexandria; during this work of mercy they were bombed by Italian aircraft. There were no British casualties.

For this fine piece of work Captain Collins (a brilliant gunnery expert) was made a C.B.; Commander Hugh St. L. Nicholson, D.S.O., R.N., senior officer of the destroyer force, was awarded a bar to the D.S.O. he had received in the Birthday Honours list announced ten days earlier. Thus in this, the first straight fight between British and Italian warships, our Navy proved itself supreme. The "Colleoni" was as powerful and as fast as modern skill could make her, and was built especially for use against destroyers. Like the "Sydney," she was armed with 6-inch guns, but was five or six knots faster than the Australian warship.

On July 22 the Admiralty gave notice of a new minefield that extended from the N.W. coast of Cornwall, between Hartland Point and Trevose Head, to the limit of Irish territorial waters between Mine Head and the Tuskar lightship. Thus the Irish Sea was closed to the south, and vessels wishing to enter that sea or the Bristol Channel had to pass round the north of Ireland.

About the time of the Dunkirk affair the Nazis had made a good deal of fuss about their E-boats—motor torpedo-craft said to possess great speed. Our approach estuaries were to be invested and patrolled by these craft, so the tale went, and our food ships sunk. There were several brushes between E-boats and similar British craft in the Channel, but no conclusive action. On July 25, however, the E-boats came into the news with a typically Nazi piece of work—the sinking of the French liner "Meknès" while taking back to France

SPLENDID WORK BY A NAVAL TRAWLER

It was a proud day for Boatswain Moorman, R.N., and his crew when H.M. trawler 'Moonstone' entered Aden harbour in triumph late in June, 1940, after having captured the Italian submarine 'Galileo Galilei' in the Gulf. In the top photograph her prize is being taken in tow by a British destroyer. (See also photograph in page 1081, and text, pages 1088-89.)

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

for repatriation a number of French soldiers and sailors from Britain. These unfortunate men, of whom nine officers and 374 other ranks were reported missing, had signified their desire to return to unoccupied France in accordance with the terms of the Franco-German armistice. The French government's representative had been notified in advance, and it was understood that a safe passage had been guaranteed.

The "Meknès" left Southampton for Marseilles on the afternoon of July 24; at 10.35 p.m. the officer of the watch heard motor engines and saw the wake of a vessel, and almost immediately the liner came under machine-gun fire. The "Meknès" stopped at once and blew her whistle as a sign that she had stopped. She then made the signal "Who are you?"; there was no reply, and she thereupon flashed her name and nationality several times. The machine-gun fire continued, and there were shots also from a heavier gun. The ship's lifeboats were holed and made unseaworthy. At 10.55 p.m. the liner was hit by a torpedo, and sank some minutes later. Her captain had been instructed to show as much light as possible, and large French flags had been painted on her deck and sides. In a Nazi broadcast the affair was described as "a particularly fine success," but the victim was described as "a heavily armed merchant ship of 18,000 tons." (See illustration in page 1065.)

Several Admiralty trawlers were reported lost about this date: "Staunton" and "Campina" (sunk by mine), "Kingston Galena" and "Rodino." Another, "Fleming," was sunk in an affray between two trawlers and four Nazi dive-bombers. A big toll was being taken of these hardy auxiliaries, manned by fishermen. The loss of H.M. Destroyer "Wren" by enemy air action was made known on July 30. Another of our destroyers, "Montrose," shot down two enemy bombers in the course of the affair. "Wren" was commanded by Lt. F. W. G. Harker, R.N.

On the last day of July there came the news of the fine exploit of the armed merchant cruiser "Alcantara," which on the 28th had tackled and damaged a Nazi commerce raider in the South Atlantic. The "Alcantara," formerly of the Royal Mail Line, was commanded by Capt. J. C. P. Ingham, D.S.O., R.N. He said that the enemy ship's topmasts were sighted on the morning of July 28; the "Alcantara" investigated and was overhauling the enemy when the latter turned and disclosed her identity by hoisting the Nazi ensign and opening fire. The British ship returned fire and scored several hits, which must have damaged the raider internally, for she reduced speed. By a piece of bad luck one of the raider's shells holed the "Alcantara's" engine room and slowed her down in turn. The raider put up a smoke screen, behind which she vanished. British casualties were two killed and seven wounded, and little material damage was done to the merchant cruiser, which put into Rio de Janeiro for such slight repairs as were needed. It turned out later that the raider was the "Narvik," a fast and well armed merchant ship.

Fine Work by 'Alcantara'

HOW BRITAIN SECURED THE FRENCH FLEET

To prevent France's warships from falling into Hitler's hands, the British Government had to take swift and drastic action. This was described by Mr. Churchill in a sombre speech in the House of Commons on July 4, 1940, most of which is reproduced below. We also give part of the statement made five days later by the First Lord of the Admiralty on further painful operations in North African ports.

It is with sincere sorrow that I must now announce to the House the measures which we have felt bound to take in order to prevent the French Fleet from falling into German hands.

When two nations are fighting together in a long and solemn alliance against a common foe, one of them may be stricken down and overwhelmed, and may be forced to ask its ally to release it from its obligations. But the least that could be expected was that the French, in abandoning the conflict and leaving its whole weight to fall upon Great Britain and the British Empire, would have been careful not to inflict needless injury upon their faithful comrades, in whose final victory the sole chance of French freedom lay and lies.

As the House will remember, we offered to give full release to the French from their treaty obligations, although these were designed for precisely the case which arose, on one condition, namely, that the French Fleet should sail for British harbours before the separate armistice negotiations with the enemy were completed. This was not done, but, on the contrary, in spite of every kind of private and personal promise and assurance given by Admiral Darlan to the First Lord and to his naval colleague, the First Sea Lord of the British Admiralty, an armistice was signed which was bound to place the French Fleet as effectively in the power of Germany and its Italian follower as a portion of the French Fleet was placed in our power when many of them, being unable to reach African ports, came into the harbours of Portsmouth and Plymouth some ten days ago.

Thus I must place on record that what might have been a mortal injury was done to us by the Bordeaux Government with full knowledge of the consequences and of our dangers and after rejecting all our appeals at the moment when they were abandoning the alliance and breaking the engagements which fortified us. . . .

Cabinet's Unanimous Decision

Last week I said that we must now look with particular attention to our own salvation. I have never in my experience seen so grim and sombre a question as what we have to do about the French Fleet discussed in the Cabinet. It shows how strong were the reasons for the course we thought it our duty to take that every member of the Cabinet had the same conviction about what should be done, and there was not the slightest hesitation or divergence among them and the three Service Ministers, as well as Ministers like the Minister of Information and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, particularly noted for their long friendship with France, who, when they were consulted, were equally convinced that no other decision than that which we took was possible. We took that decision, and it was a decision to which, with aching hearts but with clear vision, we unitedly came.

Accordingly early yesterday morning, July 3, after all preparations had been made, we took the greater part of the French Fleet under our control, or else called upon them with adequate force to comply with our requirements.

Two battleships, two light cruisers, some submarines, including a very large one, the "Surcouf," eight destroyers, and approximately 200 smaller but extremely useful mine-sweeping and anti-submarine craft, which lay for the most part in Portsmouth and Plymouth, and some at Sheerness, were boarded by superior forces after brief notice had been given wherever possible to their captains.

This operation was successfully carried out without resistance or bloodshed, except in one instance. A scuffle arose through a misunderstanding in the submarine "Surcouf," in which one British seaman was killed and two British officers and one rating wounded and one French officer was also killed and one wounded.

For the rest the French sailors in the main cheerfully accepted the end of a period of uncertainty. A considerable number—800 or 900—have expressed an ardent desire to continue the war and some have asked for British nationality. This we are ready to grant without prejudice to other Frenchmen, numbered by thousands, who prefer to fight with us as Frenchmen. All the rest of these crews will be immediately repatriated to French ports when the French Government are able to make arrangements for their reception by permission of their German rulers. We are also repatriating all the French troops who were in this country, except those who of their own free will have volunteered to follow General de Gaulle and enlist in the French force of liberation, of which he is the chief. Several French submarines have also joined us independently, and we have accepted their services.

French Ships Lying at Alexandria

Now I return to the Mediterranean. At Alexandria, where a strong British battle fleet is lying, there are, besides a French battleship, four French cruisers, three modern 8-inch gun vessels, and a number of smaller ships.

These have been informed that they cannot be permitted to leave the harbour and thus fall within the power of the German conquerors of France. Protracted negotiations, with the details of which I need not trouble the House, have necessarily been taking place, and measures have now been taken to ensure that those ships, which are commanded by a very gallant Admiral, shall be sunk or otherwise made to comply with our wishes.

The anguish which this process has naturally caused to the British and French naval officers concerned may be readily imagined when I tell the House that only this morning, in the air raid on Alexandria by Italian aircraft, some of the French ships fired heavily and effectively with us against the common enemy.

We shall, of course, offer the fullest facilities to all French officers and men at Alexandria who wish to continue the war and will provide for them and maintain them during the conflict. We have promised to repatriate all the rest, and every care in our power will be taken, if they allow it, for their safety and comfort.

So much for Alexandria. But the most serious part of the story remains. Two of the finest vessels of the French Fleet, the "Dunkerque" and "Strasbourg," modern battle cruisers much superior to the "Scharnhorst" and the "Gneisenau," lay, with two other battleships, several light cruisers and a number of destroyers and submarines and other vessels, at Oran and its adjacent military port of Mers-el-Kebir, on the North African shore of Morocco.

Yesterday morning a carefully chosen British officer, Capt. Holland, who was lately Naval Attaché at Paris, waited on the French admiral, Admiral Gensoul, and on being refused an interview presented the following document.

Ultimatum to French Admiral at Oran

The first two paragraphs deal with the question of the Armistice, which I have already explained. The fourth paragraph, which is the operative one, begins:

> It is impossible for us, your comrades up to now, to allow your fine ships to fall into the power of the German or Italian enemy. We are determined to fight on to the end, and if we win, as we think we shall, we shall never forget that France was our Ally, that our interests are the same as hers, and that our common enemy is Germany. Should we conquer we solemnly declare that we shall restore the greatness and territory of France.

GRIM REPLY TO A HIDDEN GERMAN THREAT

For this purpose we must make sure that the best ships of the French Navy shall not be used against us by the common foe. In these circumstances his Majesty's Government have instructed me to demand that the French Fleet now at Mers-el-Kebir and Oran shall act in accordance with one of the following alternatives:

(a) Sail with us and continue the fight.

(b) Sail with reduced crews under our control to a British port.

If either of these courses is adopted by you we will restore your ships to France at the conclusion of the war or pay full compensation if they are damaged meanwhile.

(c) Alternatively, if you feel bound to stipulate that your ships shall not be used against Germany or Italy, then sail them with us with reduced crews to some French port in the West Indies—Martinique, for instance—where they can be demilitarized to our satisfaction or perhaps entrusted to the United States to remain over until the end of the war, the crews being liberated.

If you refuse these fair offers I must with profound regret require you to sink your ships within six hours. Failing the above, I have the orders of his Majesty's Government to use whatever force may be necessary to prevent your ships falling into German or Italian hands.

We had hoped that one or other of the alternatives which we presented would have been accepted without the necessity of using the terrible force of a British battle squadron.

Such a squadron arrived before Oran two hours after Capt. Holland and his destroyers. The squadron was commanded by Vice-Admiral Somerville, an officer who distinguished himself lately in bringing off over 100,000 Frenchmen during the evacuation of Dunkirk. Admiral Somerville was further provided with a cruiser force and strong flotillas.

All day the parleys continued, and we hoped until the afternoon that our terms would be accepted without bloodshed. However, no doubt in accordance with orders dictated by the Germans from Wiesbaden, where the Franco-German Armistice Commission was in session, Admiral Gensoul refused to comply, and announced his intention of fighting.

British Forced to Open Fire

ADMIRAL SOMERVILLE was therefore ordered to complete his mission before darkness fell, and at 5.58 opened fire on this powerful French fleet, which was also protected by shore batteries. At 6 p.m. he reported that he was heavily engaged. The action lasted some ten minutes, and was followed by heavy attacks from our naval aircraft carried in the "Ark Royal."

At 7.20 Admiral Somerville forwarded a further report which stated that a battle cruiser of the Strasbourg class was damaged and ashore, that a battleship of the Bretagne class had been sunk and another of the same class had been heavily damaged, that two French destroyers and a seaplane carrier, the "Commandant Teste," were also sunk or burned.

While this melancholy action was being fought another battle cruiser, of the Strasbourg or Dunkerque class, managed to slip out of harbour in a gallant effort to reach Toulon or a North African port and place herself under German control. She was pursued by aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm and hit by at least one torpedo.

She may, however, have been joined by some other French vessels from Algiers or which were favourably placed during the night. The whole were able to reach Toulon before we could overtake them. The "Dunkerque" will at any rate be out of action for many months to come.

I need scarcely say that the French ships fought, albeit in this unnatural cause, with the characteristic courage of the French Navy, and every allowance must be made for Admiral Gensoul and his officers, who felt themselves obliged to obey the orders they received from the Government at German dictation.

I fear that the loss of life among the French in the harbour must have been heavy, as we were compelled to use a very severe measure of force. Several immense explosions were heard. None of the British ships taking part in the action was in any way affected in gun-power or mobility by the heavy fire directed on them. I have not received any report of our casualties, but Admiral Somerville's Fleet is in all military respects intact and ready for further action.

The Italian Navy, for whose reception we had also made arrangements, and which is, of course, considerably stronger numerically than the Fleet we used at Oran, kept prudently out of reach. However, we trust that their turn will come in the operations which we shall pursue to secure the effectual command of the Mediterranean.

A large proportion of the French Fleet has therefore passed into our hands or been put out of action or otherwise withheld from Germany by yesterday's events. The House will not expect me to say anything about other French ships which are at large except this, that it is our inflexible resolve to do everything that is possible to prevent them falling into German hands.

Sir, we leave the judgment of our action with confidence to Parliament. I leave it to the nation. I leave it to the United States. I leave it to the world and history. . . .

MR. A. V. ALEXANDER, *FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY*, IN A STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, JULY 9, 1940:

SINCE July 3 the Royal Navy have carried out two further operations designed to increase the security of this country against the use of French warships by the enemy. On July 6 a French battle cruiser of the Dunkerque class, which had been damaged and driven ashore at Oran, was attacked by aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm, which obtained six hits. As a result, this powerful ship will be incapable of effective use for a long time to come.

Apart from the ships thus dealt with, there lay at Dakar, in French West Africa, the 35,000-ton battleship "Richelieu," which had just been completed and is the most modern and formidable capital ship in the world immediately available for active operations.

In accordance with the decision announced to the House by the Prime Minister, H.M. Government decided that steps must also be taken to ensure that this vessel did not fall into enemy hands in a condition in which she could be used against us. A force was accordingly dispatched to Dakar with orders to present to the French Admiral there proposals similar to those afforded to the French Commander at Oran.

On July 7 the flag officer entrusted with this operation sent one of his captains ahead in a sloop in order to present the terms in person. On arrival, this ship was informed by the French authorities that they would open fire if she approached close to the harbour, and it was only after an interval that the French consented to receive this communication by signal.

In view of the statements made by the French Government, concerning the terms offered at Oran, I think that it is desirable that I should recapitulate now those put to the Admiral at Oran. H.M. Government offered four alternatives:

First: That the French ship should sail with reduced crew under escort to a British port with a guarantee that the crew would at once be repatriated, and that at the end of the war the ship would be returned to France. Secondly, they should sail with reduced crew to a French port in the West Indies, where they could be demilitarized or perhaps entrusted to the United States for safe keeping. Thirdly, that the ship should be demilitarized in Dakar within twelve hours, or, fourthly, it should be sunk with a time-limit some hours after the receipt of the signal by the French authority.

No satisfactory reply was received within this limit. Notwithstanding, the British naval flag officer in charge waited longer before carrying out his orders to use force. Finally, as it became clear that the French authorities did not propose to accede to any of the British suggestions, he had no alternative but to carry out his painful duty in the early hours of July 8. . . . I need not emphasize that the transfer of this powerful modern capital fleet to the enemy would have altered the whole balance of naval strength, with incalculable results to our cause. As a result of the measures which we have taken, this grave anxiety is now removed.

Perhaps the House will permit me to add a word of thanks to our naval staff, who had to plan these recent operations immediately following the completion of the evacuation in the face of the enemy of troops and refugees totalling no fewer than 600,000—the greatest achievement of its kind in the history of naval operations and a remarkable tribute to the value of our power, power we do not intend to lose, but rather do we intend to prevent the seaborne invasion of these islands and the escape of any marauders who dare to set foot here.



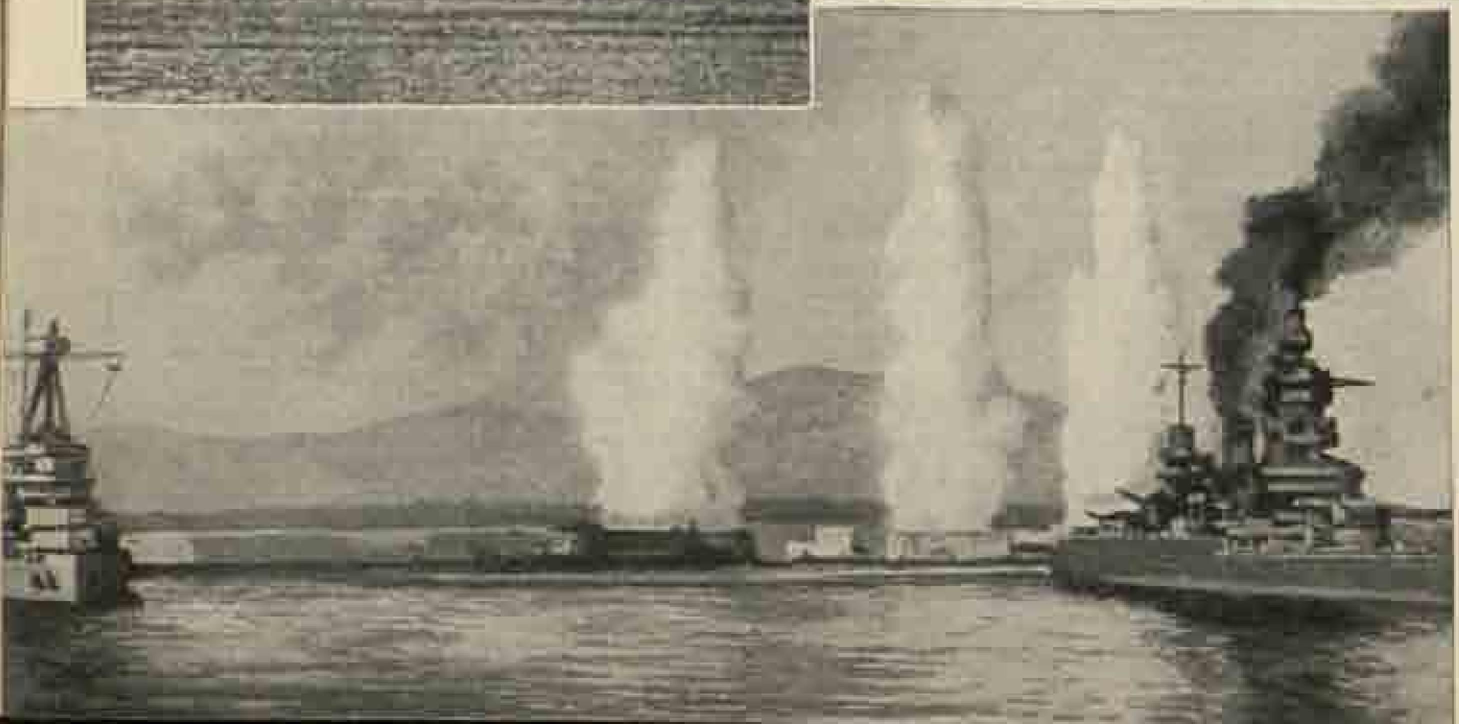
'BRETAGNE' AND 'STRASBOURG' AT ORAN

The 22,000-ton French battleship 'Bretagne' was set on fire by British shells (below), and so badly mauled that she was beached as shown at left. In the confusion of the action the battleship 'Strasbourg' (26,500 tons) evaded British units and escaped, though not without being torpedoed in the subsequent pursuit by Naval aircraft. Bottom, the 'Strasbourg' getting up steam for her dash; on her left is the 'Provence.' British shells are bursting in the background. Left, centre, the 'Strasbourg' about to run the gauntlet.

Photos, Keystone; Central Press







THE 'MELANCHOLY ACTIONS' AT ORAN AND DAKAR IN JULY, 1940

Fate of the French Fleet in Doubt—Franco-German Armistice Conditions—British Government's Realistic Action to Forestall the Nazis—French Warships in British Ports Immobilized—Admiral Somerville Opens Fire at Oran—Further Action Against the 'Dunkerque'—British Proposals Accepted at Alexandria—'Richelieu' Disabled at Dakar—First Lord's Review of Position

When in the middle of June, 1940, it became clear that the Bordeaux Government were contemplating the conclusion of a separate peace with the enemy, the British Government issued a statement (see page 1008) pointing out that even if France's resistance on land were seriously weakened, she still had the most powerful navy in Europe after the British Navy, and this great Allied Fleet was fully capable of enforcing the blockade, which had become ever more effective as a result of Italy's entry into the war. On June 16 the French Premier asked the British Government for a formal release from the obligation that a separate peace should not be concluded by either of the parties.

In reply Mr. Churchill said that:

"provided that the French Fleet was dispatched to British ports and remained there while the negotiations were conducted, His Majesty's Government would give their consent to the French Government asking what terms of armistice would be open to them."

Mr. Churchill pointed out that the British Government were resolved to continue the war and altogether cut themselves out of any association with such inquiries about an armistice.

With the fall of Reynaud and those of his party who were in favour of continuing resistance, the position worsened. Marshal Pétain was now Premier, and he made haste to get in touch with the Nazis. Mr. Churchill was in the train about to set out for Bordeaux when he heard of Reynaud's resignation; returning to Whitehall, he at once had a reminder sent to the new French Government that the condition insisted upon by the British Government had not been complied with. Next day came Pétain's broadcast in which he told the French people that they "must cease to fight."

Pétain Sues for Peace

It was now clear that the Pétain group was composed of men who felt bound to make the best terms they could, despite France's obligations to Britain; it also included politicians whose loyalty to the Alliance in any case was doubtful, to say the least. Evidently these men thought it expedient to do nothing for the moment about the French fleet, but the British Government could not be expected to let the matter stand in this unsatisfactory state. The situation would be bad enough if the French ports in the Channel and the Bay of Biscay were to become available to the enemy for his piratical onslaughts on our shipping; it would become grave indeed if the German navy were to be strengthened by the fine French warships in these ports or at large on the seas. Such an event would mean the transfer to our foes of some ninety submarines and seventy torpedo craft, to say nothing of cruisers and capital ships.

But until the receipt of the German terms nothing definite could be known about the future position, though it was easy to conjecture what the Nazis would demand of Pétain's plenipotentiaries, who included Vice-Admiral Leluc as the naval member of the delegation. On June 22 the Nazi demands were presented—and accepted by France; the terms are printed in page 1018. The French fleet, fully armed, was to be handed over lock, stock and barrel—"except that part left free for the safeguard of French interests in the Colonial Empire" (Art. 8). The German Government solemnly declared that it had no intention of using for its own purposes during the war the French fleet stationed in ports under German control except those units necessary for coast surveillance and mine-sweeping.

Two important points should be noted: the terms were those of an armistice, to be valid until the conclusion of a peace treaty and to be denounced at any moment "if the French Government do not fulfil their obligations" (Art. 24). Then the interpretation of the condition cited above, dealing with units for coast surveillance and mine-sweeping, was left to the Nazis, who



SAFEGUARD OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

For many months French and British warships had collaborated in the Fleet based on Alexandria, and when the surrender of France raised difficult issues for our Ally the French Admiral accepted British proposals to prevent Nazi control of his ships. Here a gunlaying team is seen at work on a British battleship off Alexandria in May, 1940, with a French vessel lying at anchor in the background.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright





OPPONENTS AT ORAN

Faced by what surely must have been the most distressing contingency of a naval career, Admiral Gensoul (top) decided to fight the British battle squadron under Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville (above). There ensued the 'melancholy action' at Oran.

THE ACTION AGAINST FRANCE'S NAVY
July 4—10, 1940

Name	Tonnage	
Battleships		
Richelieu	35,000	Completed, but not in commission; put out of action by British Navy at Dakar on July 8.
Jean Bart	35,000	Afloat, but not completed.
Strasbourg... ...	26,500	Torpedoed after gaining open sea at Oran. Reached Toulon.
Dunkerque ...	26,500	Badly damaged at Oran and ashore; bombed later.
Bretagne ... ... Provence ... ... Courbet ... ... Paris ... ... Lorraine	22,189	One sunk, one heavily damaged at Oran. Two in British ports, one at Alexandria.
Aircraft Carrier		
Béarn	22,146	Reported (July 8) at Martinique.
Aircraft Transport		
Commandant Teste	10,000	Reported sunk or burned at Oran.
Cruisers		
Algérie ... ... Four of the Suffren class ... ... Two of the Duquesne class ...	10,000	Three at Alexandria.
Ten light cruisers of varying tonnage		Two in British ports; one at Alexandria; five reached Toulon.
Destroyers & Torpedo Boats, etc.		
Over 70 vessels	2,800 downward	Eight in British ports; Mogador and another sunk or burned at Oran.
Submarines		
Surcouf ...	3,000	In British port.
Forty-five first-class craft... Over forty second-class craft...		Some in British hands.
Small craft		Over 200 in British ports and more at Alexandria and Oran.

Note.—Under construction (some may have been put into service): 2 battleships, 3 cruisers and many destroyers and smaller craft.

The ships at Alexandria were demilitarized by agreement on July 7.

might stretch it to include what they wished. Finally, if the fleet were indeed surrendered and the Germans honourably kept their promise, the position at the eventual conclusion of a peace treaty was unpredictable and the enemy had absolute freedom to make further claims then. But the entire situation, from the British point of view, depended on the practical impossibility of trusting any promise made by Hitler and his followers. As Mr. Churchill said in Parliament on June 25, what was the value of the German declaration? "Ask half a dozen countries," he continued, "what is the value of such a solemn assurance."

From the British point of view the situation, both actual and potential, must be faced in a realistic manner. Fortunately in Mr. Churchill Britain had at her head a true realist, who was not slow to take all steps necessary for the Empire's safety. On July 3 the British Government took control of all French warships in British harbours, and in almost all cases this transfer was effected peaceably. There remained certain French warships in French colonial ports, while at Alexandria there was a large number of vessels under Admiral Godefroy which had been cooperating with the British Fleet.

At Alexandria the French commander accepted British proposals for the immobilization of his warships, and the matter was settled amicably. But at Oran, unfortunately, the Admiral in command felt it his duty to refuse conditions presented by Britain, and our battle squadron had to fire upon their former allies.

The position after these happenings is shown in the accompanying Table.







ORAN, OF UNHAPPY MEMORY

At the port of Oran, of vital importance in Mediterranean strategy, were four French battleships, with cruisers, destroyers, and submarines. In view of the danger, after the collapse of France, that these might pass under enemy control, three 'fair offers' were made to Admiral Gensoul, the French commander. He refused them and decided to resist. Left, Captain C. S. Holland, R.N., who conveyed the British terms to the French admiral on the morning of July 3, 1940.

Photos, Topical; G.P.U.; Associated Press



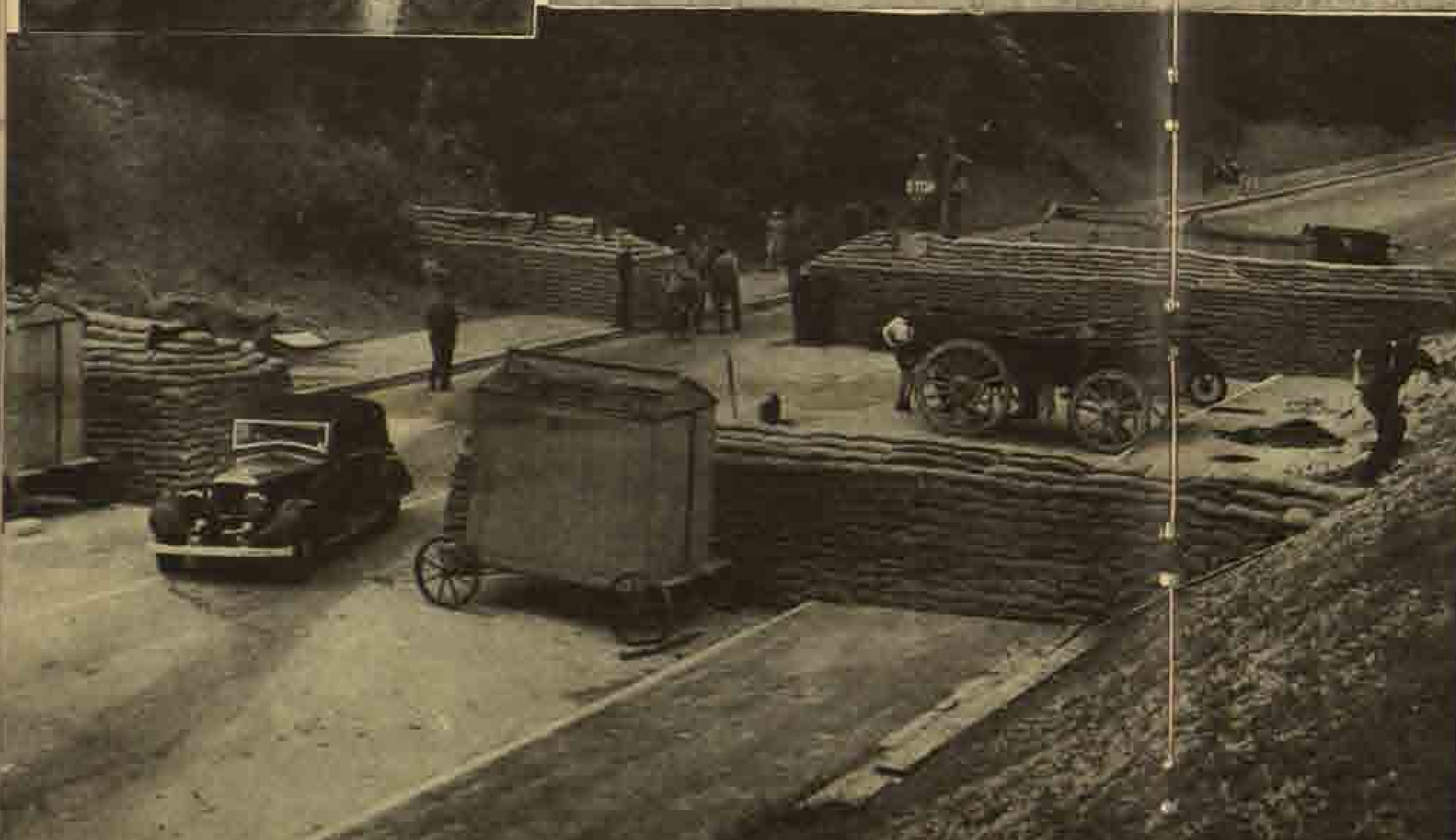
READY FOR ANY INVADER

After the collapse of France at the end of June, 1940, had made a German invasion appear imminent, no time was lost in fortifying our roads with blocks and barricades, and in protecting Government buildings. Here is a vigilant sentry seen through barbed wire against the background of that symbol of Britain's freedom—the Houses of Parliament.

Photo, Central Press







TRAPS AND PITFALLS FOR THE NAZI INVADER

After the Nazis had overrun France at the end of June, 1940, swift action was taken to protect British roads of importance by concrete blocks (top, left) and more elaborate defences composed of sandbags (below, left, as used in a coastal district where even shepherds' huts and farm wagons suitably treated were brought into service). Broad open spaces like meadows were blocked against enemy aircraft by rows of derelict cars (top, right) or piles of rubble. Such static defences were mainly left in charge of the Home Guard at this early stage, and regular military units (such as the Bren gunners seen at right, in an ancient castle) manned other strong points.

Photos, Central Press; Topical Press; L.N.A.; British Official: Crown Copyright





MEN FROM THE DOMINIONS TO DEFEND THE HOMELAND

As part of that process by which every village and hamlet in Britain was speedily turned into a strong point to resist invasion, men from our Dominions were brought to Britain in great numbers and trained in the most up-to-date tactics of offensive defence. Here Australian soldiers (of whom the first arrived in June, 1940) are seen with a howitzer between the ricks in an English meadow.

Photo, Wide World

At Portsmouth, Plymouth and Sheerness, where they had gathered after the final collapse of France, we took control of two battleships, two light cruisers, some submarines, eight destroyers and some 200 smaller naval craft. Among the underwater craft was the giant submarine "Surcouf"; in a scuffle on board her Lieut.-Cmdr. Dennis Sprague, R.N., and an A.B. and one French officer were killed—practically the only incidents to mar an otherwise peaceable transfer.

Scuffle on the 'Surcouf'

French naval vessels at Alexandria included a battleship, four cruisers and

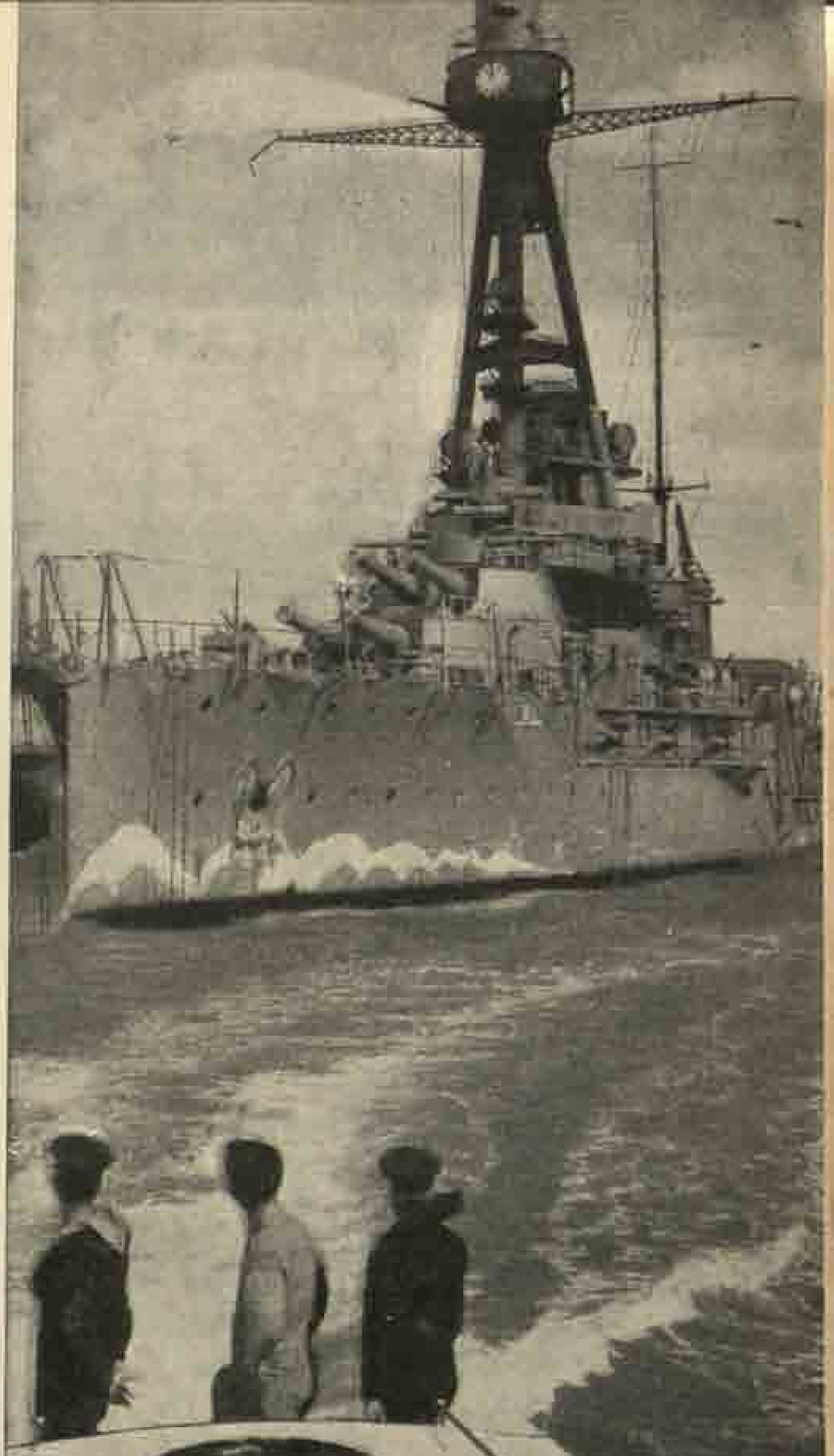


VICTIM OF A MISUNDERSTANDING

In taking over the giant French submarine 'Surcouf' (see photograph in page 340) there ensued a scuffle due to a misunderstanding, in which Lieut.-Cmdr. Dennis Sprague, R.N. (above), and a British sailor lost their lives.
Photo, Vandyk

a number of smaller units. At Oran and its adjacent port of Mers-el-Kebir, on the northern African shore of Morocco, were the "Dunkerque" and "Strasbourg" (both 26,500 tons), with two other battleships of an earlier type belonging to the Bretagne class. In addition there were several light cruisers, with destroyers, submarines and other vessels. On the morning of July 3 Captain C. S. Holland, R.N., who had arrived in a destroyer, requested an interview with the French commander, Admiral Gensoul, and on this being refused presented a document whose vital fourth paragraph began:

It is impossible for us, your comrades up to now, to allow your fine ships to fall into the power of the German or Italian enemy.



FINE FRENCH SHIP SAFE FROM THE NAZIS

Following the collapse of France many of her naval vessels steamed into British ports, where on July 3, 1940, they were taken under the control of the Royal Navy. Three battleships of the Bretagne and Courbet classes thus came into British hands. Here is the 22,000-ton 'Courbet,' photographed early in July at a southern port of Britain.
Photo, G.P.U.

We are determined to fight on to the end, and if we win, as we think we shall, we shall never forget that France was our Ally, that our interests are the same as hers, and that our common enemy is Germany. Should we conquer we solemnly declare that we shall restore the greatness and territory of France.

Then it proceeded to demand that the French should either:

(a) Sail with us and continue the fight.

(b) Sail with reduced crews under our control to a British port. . . .

(c) Alternatively, if you feel bound to stipulate that your ships shall not be used against Germany or Italy, then sail with us with reduced crews to some French port in the West Indies—Martinique, for instance—where they can be demilitarized to our satisfaction or perhaps entrusted to the United States to remain over until the end of the war, the crews being liberated.

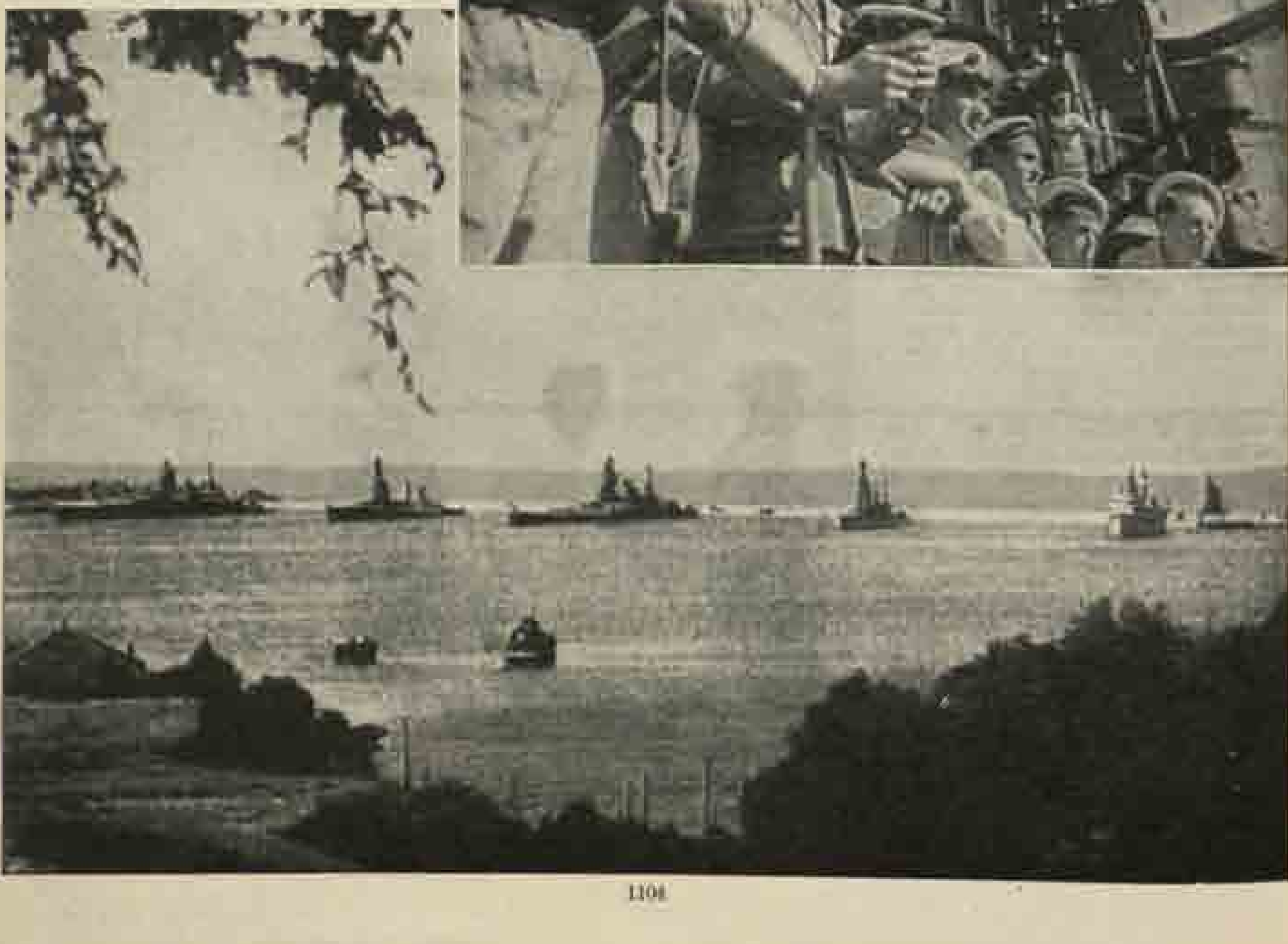
If you refuse these fair offers I must with profound regret require you to sink your ships within six hours.

Failing the above, I have the orders of His Majesty's Government to use whatever force may be necessary to prevent your ships falling into German or Italian hands.

But Admiral Gensoul refused acceptance of any one of the alternatives offered to him and declared that he would fight. So there ensued what Mr. Churchill termed "this melancholy action" (see Historic Documents, No. 154, in page 1095). Some hours earlier a British battle squadron with cruisers and destroyers had arrived off Oran under the command of Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville. At 5.58 p.m. British warships opened fire; at 6 p.m. he reported that he was heavily engaged.

The action lasted some ten minutes and was followed by heavy attacks by naval aircraft from H.M.S. "Ark Royal." At 7.20 p.m. Somerville forwarded a further report which stated that a battleship (later known to be the "Dunkerque") was damaged and ashore; that one battleship of the Bretagne class had been sunk and another heavily damaged; and that two French destroyers and a seaplane carrier ("Commandant Teste") were also sunk or burned. Later, Admiral Gensoul signalled that his warships were *hors de combat* and that he was ordering the personnel to evacuate the ships.





TENSE MOMENTS AT ORAN

Below French warships are at anchor off Oran on July 3, 1940, not long before the British battle squadron was compelled to open fire. At the right, aboard the 'Dunkerque,' French officers and sailors anxiously await the decision of Admiral Gensoul, to whom three alternatives had been offered by the British Commander.

Photos, Keystone, Planet News

The "Strasbourg," five cruisers, some torpedo-boats and several smaller vessels slipped out during the action and made their way to Toulon. The battleship, however, was pursued and torpedoed by aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm.

Our casualties in this unhappy but vitally necessary affair were two wounded and two missing. None of the British ships was in any way affected in mobility or gun-power by the heavy fire directed upon them. A French communiqué issued some days later said that three of the French ships which were most heavily damaged on July 3 had capsized; a light vessel, the stern of which had been torn away by explosions, had also capsized. From the battleship "Bretagne" there were said to be only two survivors. Casualties in the "Dunkerque," "Provence" and "Mogador" totalled 200 killed or missing and 115 wounded.

But the task was not completed in this first action, and if the Nazis were to be prevented from turning the fine vessels of our former ally upon us there was more melancholy work to be done. On July 6 our Naval aircraft secured six hits upon the crippled "Dunkerque" as she lay aground, and thus made sure she would not fight again.

The French Government made allegations that our forces on July 3 had machine-gunned French sailors on the deck of the "Dunkerque" and when they were trying to abandon ship. In denying these charges the British Admiralty stated that in the first action at Oran the Fleet Air Arm aircraft delivered dive-bombing attacks; machine-guns were not used by any of our aircraft, nor were these weapons used during the second action against the "Dunkerque" by units of the Fleet Air Arm. The Admiralty recalled that after the first action Admiral Gensoul had signalled that he was ordering the crews to evacuate the warships, and that therefore there should have been no men on board the "Dunkerque" when this second action was taken by British forces.

An Allegation Refuted

The French people were misinformed by the Bordeaux authorities about the choice presented to Admiral Gensoul by Great Britain, and also with regard to the effect of the German armistice terms, which specified "home ports" as those to which the French warships should return for demilitarization; the Pétain Government stated that the vessels were to be taken to ports in the unoccupied zone—a very different matter. General de Gaulle, in a broadcast

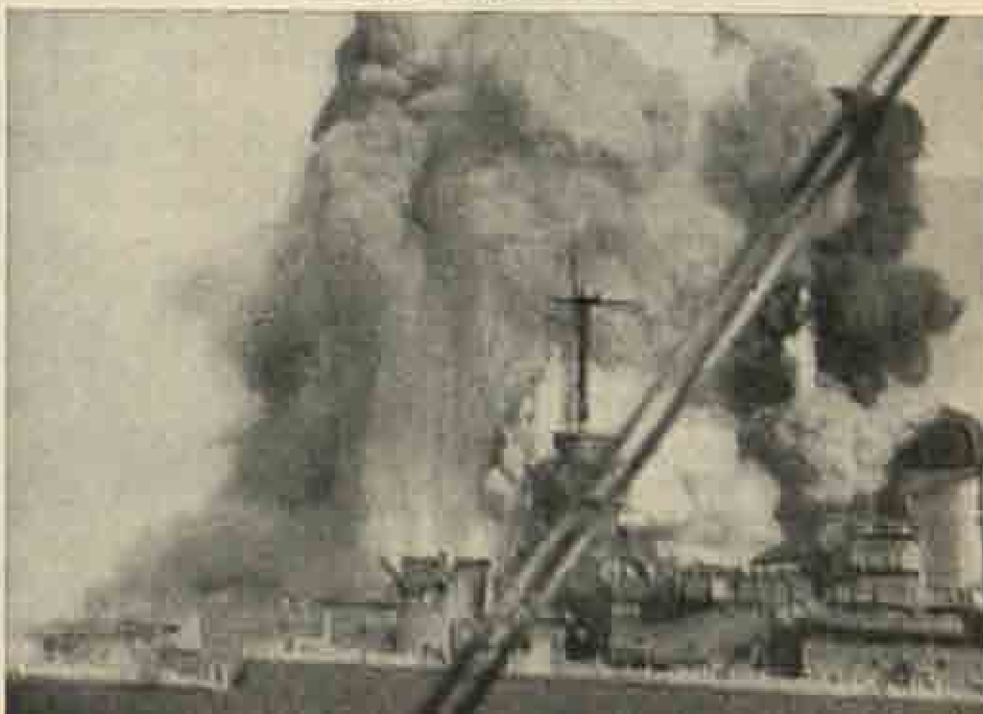




LAMENTABLE FATE OF THE 'DUNKERQUE'

Because Admiral Gensoul, commanding at Oran, could not see his way to accept any of the offers made by Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville on July 3, 1940, British warships opened fire on the 'Dunkerque' (above) and other French naval vessels. Top, on the 'Dunkerque's' deck after hits by British shells; below, a magazine explodes. Commissioned in 1937, this fine warship displaced 26,500 tons; her main armament was eight 13-inch guns in two quadruple turrets.

Photos, Keystone; Wright & Logan

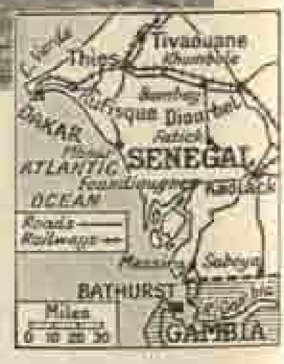




WHERE THE 'RICHELIEU' WAS IMMOBILIZED

As one of the preventive measures taken to ensure that the warships of fallen France should not pass into Nazi hands the battleship 'Richelieu' was attacked where she lay in harbour at Dakar (above, and see map) and put out of action on July 8, 1940

Photo, Planet News



to France on July 8, admirably expressed the balanced view of patriotic French people who knew the facts about this unhappy affair. He said:

There is not a Frenchman who has learnt without grief and anger that units of the French Fleet have been sunk by our Allies. That grief and that anger come from our very hearts. There is no reason to gloss over these feelings, and I must express them openly. Therefore, speaking to the British people, I ask them to spare us and spare themselves from any interpretation of this tragedy as a direct naval success.

It would be unfair. The French ships at Oran were in fact incapable of fighting. They were at their moorings unable to manoeuvre or scatter, with officers and crews who had been corroded for a fortnight by the worst moral sufferings. They gave the British ships the advantage of the first salvos, which, as everyone knows, are decisive at sea at such a short range. Their destruction is not the result of a battle. This is what a French soldier tells the British Allies all the more clearly because he respects them in naval matters.

Next, speaking to the French people, I ask them to consider things from the only point of view which must count—that of victory and liberation. The *Bordeaux* Government had agreed to hand over ships to the enemy's discretion. There could not be the slightest doubt that on principle and out of necessity the enemy would have used them either against Great Britain or against the French Empire, and I say without hesitation that it was better they should have been destroyed. I would rather know that the Dunkerque—our beautiful, our beloved, our powerful Dunkerque—is aground at Oran than see her one day manned by Germans and shelling English ports, or Algiers, Casablanca, or Dakar.

A few days later came the action at Dakar, in French West Africa, where lay one of the two latest and largest of the French battleships: "Richelieu" (completed so recently that she had not yet been put into commission). Here, as at Oran, the French admiral was given the opportunity of an honourable agreement that would save his ship and yet prevent it being used against Britain. The terms proffered were similar to those which Admiral Gensoul had rejected, and were likewise refused



'PAINFUL DUTY' CARRIED OUT WITH RESOLUTE BRAVERY

Lieut.-Cmdr. R. H. Bristowe, R.N. (left), was in command of a motor-boat which went into Dakar harbour and dropped depth charges close alongside the 'Richelieu' (below) as she lay at anchor in shallow water. The resulting explosions damaged steering gear and propellers. Then the warship was attacked with aerial torpedoes by Fleet Air Arm aircraft.

Drawing by Laurence Dunn; Photo, L.N.A.



by the authorities at Dakar. Thus, in the words of the First Lord, the British naval officer in charge "had no alternative but to carry out his painful duties. . . ."

In the early hours of July 8 a ship's motor-boat, under the command of Lt.-Cmdr. R. H. Bristowe, was sent into the harbour carrying depth charges. Passing under the boom defences the boat went alongside the port quarter of the "Richelieu" and dropped charges close under the stern of the warship as she lay at anchor in shallow water—the object being to damage the steering gear and propellers. On the return the motor-boat broke down and lay helpless for a time. She was discovered, but fortunately the crew were able to get one engine going; she escaped from the harbour by crossing the defence nets, which held up her pursuers. This brilliant, daring and dangerous operation made possible the second part of the attack, by aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm. The warship was hit by a number of aerial torpedoes, and five explosions were heard by the crew of the motor-boat. Air reconnaissance later established that the "Richelieu" was down by the stern and had a list to port. A large quantity of fuel oil covered the surface of the water round the ship.

Lt.-Cmdr. Bristowe Disables 'Richelieu'



FRENCH WARSHIPS CONTROLLED BY PÉTAIN

Among French naval units which remained under the control of the Vichy Government after the Franco-German Armistice were the three cruisers seen here, later to play a dramatic part at Dakar some two months after. They are: 'Georges Leygues,' 'Montcalm,' and 'Gloire.'

Photo, Associated Press



CHIEF OF FREE FRENCH NAVAL FORCES

Vice-Admiral Muselier, here seen inspecting a guard of honour on a French depot ship at a British port, was selected by General de Gaulle to command the Free French Naval and Air Forces.

Photo, Keystone

Summing up the position as it stood on July 9, the First Lord (Mr. A. V. Alexander) said that out of the eight capital ships belonging to France, three warships of the Bretagne and Courbet classes had passed under our control; one had been sunk and one badly damaged and immobilized. Of the two modern battle-cruisers one had been driven ashore at Oran and would be out of action for some time; the other had managed to escape after being hit by an aerial torpedo. In addition to the "Richelieu," now disabled at Dakar, there remained only the "Jean Bart," which Mr. Alexander said would not be complete for service for some months to come.

So the menace was countered, and Britain, instead of having to face the threat of a French battle fleet in German hands, had acquired a number of valuable warships which probably came under the command of Vice-Admiral Muselier, whom General de Gaulle on July 1 had appointed to be Commander of the Free French Naval Forces and the Free French Air Force.

Muselier had been a collaborator of Clemenceau in 1917–18, and after the armistice of 1918 had commanded the naval and coastal defence units at Marseilles. In the early part of June, 1940, he had been in charge of factories working on munitions and had become aware of the trend towards capitulation. Hastening to Paris, he got into the capital almost as the enemy entered, and managed to destroy secret plans and plant in certain defence factories. Then the Admiral made his way to Marseilles, where with naval officers and men he took control of a French warship and sailed to Gibraltar. A few days later he flew to Britain and joined General de Gaulle.

Historic Documents. CLXVI

IF THE INVADER COMES: What to Do—and How to Do it

(Leaflet issued in June, 1940, by the Ministry of Information. *See* page 1100.)

THE Germans threaten to invade Great Britain. If they do so they will be driven out by our Navy, our Army and our Air Force. Yet the ordinary men and women of the civilian population will also have their part to play. Hitler's invasions of Poland, Holland and Belgium were greatly helped by the fact that the civilian population was taken by surprise. They did not know what to do when the moment came. *You must not be taken by surprise.* This leaflet tells you what general line you should take. More detailed instructions will be given you when the danger comes nearer. Meanwhile, read these instructions carefully and be prepared to carry them out.

I

When Holland and Belgium were invaded, the civilian population fled from their homes. They crowded on the roads, in cars, in carts, on bicycles and on foot, and so helped the enemy by preventing their own armies from advancing against the invaders. You must not allow that to happen here. Your first rule, therefore, is:—

(1) IF THE GERMANS COME, BY PARACHUTE, AEROPLANE OR SHIP, YOU MUST REMAIN WHERE YOU ARE. THE ORDER IS "STAY PUT."

If the Commander-in-Chief decides that the place where you live must be evacuated, he will tell you when and how to leave. Until you receive such orders you must remain where you are. If you run away, you will be exposed to far greater danger because you will be machine-gunned from the air as were civilians in Holland and Belgium, and you will also block the roads by which our own armies will advance to turn the Germans out.

II

There is another method which the Germans adopt in their invasion. They make use of the civilian population in order to create confusion and panic. They spread false rumours and issue false instructions. In order to prevent this, you should obey the second rule, which is as follows:—

(2) DO NOT BELIEVE RUMOURS AND DO NOT SPREAD THEM. WHEN YOU RECEIVE AN ORDER, MAKE QUITE SURE THAT IT IS A TRUE ORDER AND NOT A FAKED ORDER. MOST OF YOU KNOW YOUR POLICEMEN AND YOUR A.R.P. WARDENS BY SIGHT, YOU CAN TRUST THEM. IF YOU KEEP YOUR HEADS, YOU CAN ALSO TELL WHETHER A MILITARY OFFICER IS REALLY BRITISH OR ONLY PRETENDING TO BE SO. IF IN DOUBT ASK THE POLICEMAN OR THE A.R.P. WARDEN. USE YOUR COMMON SENSE.

III

The Army, the Air Force and the Local Defence Volunteers cannot be everywhere at once. The ordinary man and woman must be on the watch. If you see anything suspicious, do not rush round telling your neighbours all about it. Go at once to the nearest policeman, police-station, or military officer and tell them exactly what you saw. Train yourself to notice the exact time and place where you saw anything suspicious, and try to give exact information. Try to check your facts. The sort of report which a military or police officer wants from you is something like this:—

> "At 5.30 p.m. tonight I saw twenty cyclists come into Little Squashborough from the direction of Great Mudtown. They carried some sort of automatic rifle or gun. I did not see anything like artillery. They were in grey uniforms."

Be calm, quick and exact. The third rule is as follows:—

(3) KEEP WATCH. IF YOU SEE ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS, NOTE IT CAREFULLY AND GO AT ONCE TO THE NEAREST POLICE OFFICER OR STATION, OR TO THE NEAREST MILITARY OFFICER. DO NOT RUSH ABOUT SPREADING VAGUE RUMOURS. GO QUICKLY TO THE NEAREST AUTHORITY AND GIVE HIM THE FACTS.

IV

Remember that if parachutists come down near your home, they will not be feeling at all brave. They will not know where they are, they will have no food, they will not know where their companions are. They will want you to give them food, means of transport and maps. They will want you to tell them where they have landed, where their comrades are, and where our own soldiers are. The fourth rule is:—

(4) DO NOT GIVE ANY GERMAN ANYTHING. DO NOT TELL HIM ANYTHING. HIDE YOUR FOOD AND YOUR BICYCLES. HIDE YOUR MAPS. SEE THAT THE ENEMY GETS NO PETROL. IF YOU HAVE A CAR OR MOTOR BICYCLE, PUT IT OUT OF ACTION WHEN NOT IN USE. IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO REMOVE THE IGNITION KEY; YOU MUST MAKE IT USELESS TO ANYONE EXCEPT YOURSELF.

IF YOU ARE A GARAGE PROPRIETOR, YOU MUST WORK OUT A PLAN TO PROTECT YOUR STOCK OF PETROL AND YOUR CUSTOMERS' CARS. REMEMBER THAT TRANSPORT AND PETROL WILL BE THE INVADER'S MAIN DIFFICULTIES. MAKE SURE THAT NO INVADER WILL BE ABLE TO GET HOLD OF YOUR CARS, PETROL, MAPS OR BICYCLES.

V

You may be asked by Army and Air Force officers to help in many ways. For instance, the time may come when you will receive orders to block roads or streets in order to prevent the enemy from advancing. Never block a road unless you are told which one you must block. Then you can help by felling trees, wiring them together or blocking the roads with cars. Here, therefore, is the fifth rule:—

(5) BE READY TO HELP THE MILITARY IN ANY WAY. BUT DO NOT BLOCK ROADS UNTIL ORDERED TO DO SO BY THE MILITARY OR L.D.V. AUTHORITIES.

VI

If you are in charge of a factory, store or other works, organize its defence at once. If you are a worker, make sure that you understand the system of defence that has been organized and know what part you have to play in it. Remember always that parachutists and fifth column men are powerless against any organized resistance. They can only succeed if they can create disorganization. Make certain that no suspicious strangers enter your premises.

You must know in advance who is to take command, who is to be second in command, and how orders are to be transmitted. This chain of command must be built up and you will probably find that ex-officers or N.C.O.s, who have been in emergencies before, are the best people to undertake such command. The sixth rule is therefore as follows:—

(6) IN FACTORIES AND SHOPS, ALL MANAGERS AND WORKMEN SHOULD ORGANIZE SOME SYSTEM NOW BY WHICH A SUDDEN ATTACK CAN BE RESISTED.

VII

The six rules which you have now read give you a general idea of what to do in the event of invasion. More detailed instructions may, when the time comes, be given you by the Military and Police Authorities and by the Local Defence Volunteers: they will NOT be given over the wireless as that might convey information to the enemy. These instructions must be obeyed at once.

Remember always that the best defence of Great Britain is the courage of her men and women. Here is rule 7:—

(7) THINK BEFORE YOU ACT. BUT THINK ALWAYS OF YOUR COUNTRY BEFORE YOU THINK OF YOURSELF.

BRITAIN MAKES READY TO MEET NAZI INVASION, JULY 1940

The Enemy Across the Narrows: Churchill's Fiery Eloquence—Repairing the Losses After Dunkirk—A Nation Mobilized for War Production—Drastic Defence Orders and Regulations—Changes in Home Commands—Blocking the Invader By Sea or Air—Reinforcing the Garrison from Oversea: Function of the Home Guard—Nazi Occupation of Channel Islands—Hitler's Prophecy and Lord Halifax's Reply—General Smuts on the Message of Dunkirk

Following the collapse of France in mid-June, 1940, Britain found herself in a position more dangerous than any she had been faced with since Napoleon looked across the Straits with eyes filled with greed and longing, or even since Philip of Spain's galleons sailed with rolling pomp up the Channel.

Britain had entered the war with France as her close ally; time and again the rulers and statesmen of the one country and the other had expressed a resolve to maintain the struggle side by side until victory should have been won. Now, however, Britain was deserted by her comrade, who, beaten on the field of battle and defeated from within by traitors and near-traitors, lay in the dust beneath the feet of the conqueror. The Nazis were cock-a-hoop: throughout the Reich joy-bells pealed, flags waved; there was a grin of triumph on the face of the Fuehrer. For soon, very soon, Britain too must surely be brought low. Nothing could save her. France had found no salvation in the Maginot Line, in the millions of her armies and in her age-old traditions of military glory. Nor would Britain find salvation, thought the enemy. Not all the efforts of her seamen, of her soldiers (still dribbling back from the stricken beaches of the Continent) or her vastly outnumbered air force could do more than postpone for a brief space the coming of the day when Britain, too, should be brought low. But the British people refused resolutely in that dark hour to be dismayed or even disheartened. As on so many other occasions in their glorious past they did not know they were beaten, and because they did not know it they were not beaten. Their spirit was one of proud defiance, an echo of Shakespeare's "Come the three corners of the world in arms and we shall shock them." It was given expression by Mr. Churchill in words of fiery eloquence which generations to come may well rank with some of the best-known and best-loved lines in Shakespeare. Even before the fall of France he had declared:


If the
INVADER
comes

WHAT TO DO — AND HOW TO DO IT

"We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender. . . ."

And again, on July 14, when the Premier's worst fears had been realized and France on that Bastille Day mourned the loss of her independence, Mr. Churchill declared in a broadcast to the nation:

"Should the invader come there will be no lying down of the people in submission as we have seen in other countries. We shall defend every village, town and city. The vast mass of London itself fought street by street could easily devour an entire hostile army, and we would rather see London laid in ruins and ashes than that it should be tamely and abjectly enslaved. . . ."

Embodied in noble words, Britain's resolve was expressed, too, in deeds of determined vigour. First, the nine divisions which had escaped at Dunkirk were reorganized and re-equipped. The men and women in the factories realized that on them lay the responsibility of repairing the huge losses of material—the ships which lay wrecked and sunk in all the harbours of Northern France. Gladly did they respond, and in every direction the work was speeded up; long-cherished and hard-won conditions of work were

Dunkirk Losses Made Good



WHEN THE NAZI INVADER WAS AWAITED
Instructed in their duties by official pamphlets such as that illustrated here (text printed in opposite page), the people of Britain awaited calmly any invasion by Hitler's forces. The discreetly worded notice above (referring to the use of church bells as an invasion warning) gives a hint of the brave and cheery manner in which everyone behaved.
Photo, John Topham









AS IN 1914, THE CITIZEN ARMY WAS READY

The top photograph (taken in 1914 at Wandsworth) shows Home Defence Volunteers of the First Great War at rifle instruction. Left, centre, is a detachment of Home Guard which brought down a Dornier bomber by its rifle fire in August, 1940. Always on the alert, Home Guards ploughed with rifles slung (below, left) or guarded our vital railway junctions (right).

Photos, Sport & General; "Daily Mirror"; Keystone

abrogated without a murmur, so that as speedily as possible Britain's soldiers might once again stand at arms.

Employers and employed alike were brought under the complete control of the Government by an Order issued by the Minister of Labour, Mr. Ernest Bevin, on June 5, which made it an offence for an employer in the engineering, building, and civil engineering industries to engage labour other than through an employment exchange, or by an approved arrangement between an employer and a trade union; the Order also prohibited employers from engaging in other employment men who were normally employed in coalmining, agriculture, forestry, or horticulture. Furthermore, compulsory conciliation was enacted for the settlement of industrial disputes in those cases where the joint negotiating machinery had failed to reach a settlement. A review of workpeople employed in a number of essential industries was undertaken, and a scheme for the introduction and training of new entrants into the munitions industries was launched.

Further drastic restrictions were imposed on the public as a whole. By an Order issued by the Board of Trade the supply to retailers of furniture, clothing, household appliances, and many articles of personal use was reduced to one-third of the value of the previous year's consumption. This was with a view to saving shipping space in the case of goods imported from overseas, and still more of permitting the diversion of labour from the production of these goods to the making of munitions. With the same ends, but also to obtain additional revenue, a Purchase Tax was imposed on the great bulk of consumer goods.



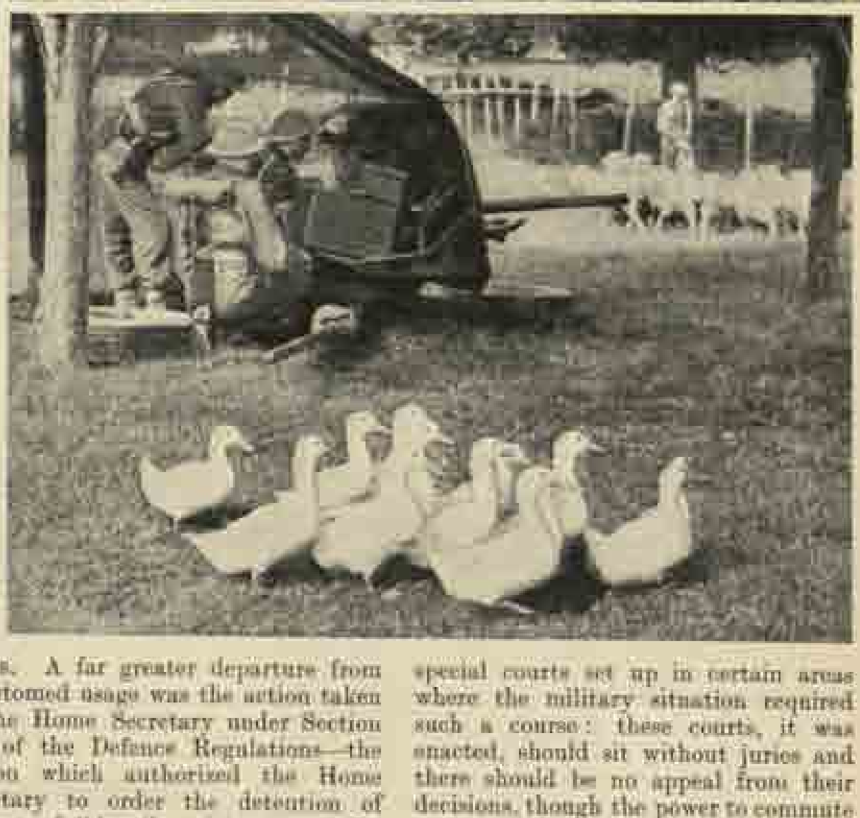


DEFENCE IN DEPTH

Extending back in zone after zone, defences were made ready against the Nazis. Top photo, field guns are firing during a mimic battle ; right, below, is an anti-tank gun ensconced in a farmer's meadow. Even in the tree-tops our men formed their 'hides,' and below, a Grenadier sergeant in full kit is practising at tree-climbing

Associated Press; Sport & General; Photopress





Yet more restrictions were imposed by a batch of Defence Orders, issued in the weeks immediately following the collapse of France. They included such comparatively minor matters as forbidding the exchange of stale bread for new; the prohibition of the issuing of new periodicals and certain types of posters and circulars, including newspaper contents bills, the manufacture of paper serviettes, book wrappers and confetti; restrictions on the manufacturing of confectionery, chocolate and ice-cream, and the immobilization of motor-cars left unattended in public places. A far greater departure from accustomed usage was the action taken by the Home Secretary under Section 18B of the Defence Regulations—the section which authorized the Home Secretary to order the detention of persons of "hostile origin or associations" and those who, in his opinion, have "been recently concerned in acts prejudicial to the public safety or the defence of the realm, or in the preparation or instigation of such acts."

Even more remarkable was the granting to the Government of power to provide for the trial of offenders by special courts set up in certain areas where the military situation required such a course: these courts, it was enacted, should sit without juries and there should be no appeal from their decisions, though the power to commute a death sentence was reserved to the Home Secretary. It is difficult to conceive anything more contrary to the accepted principles of British freedom than such restrictions upon the liberty of the subject as the imprisonment of persons against whom no specific charge had been made and who were not permitted to be confronted by, or even to know,

their accusers, and without any form of trial, although they might appeal to specially constituted tribunals. Yet these restrictions were readily submitted to in the belief that they were virtually necessary in that hour of extreme urgency. At the end of June the number of persons detained under these Regulations was stated to be 750, among them a large number of members of the British Union, Sir Oswald Mosley's Fascist organization. At the same time a tremendous drive was conducted against aliens, who, with little discrimination between friend and foe, were dispatched in droves to the internment camp or even shipped overseas.

While these developments were proceeding on the Home Front, the organization and re-equipment of the Army were going on apace. The Army, it was reported, was in excellent heart, confident of its ability to attack and to destroy the enemy; it possessed all the officers and non-commissioned officers it needed, and, moreover, many of these had now learnt modern war in the hard but incomparable school of actual experience. The divisions of the B.E.F. were rapidly brought up to full strength, and placed at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief, to play their part, if need be, in the battle of Britain. At the same time, the intake of men was largely increased, for during the most critical weeks the number of men called to the colours averaged 7,000 a day—exclusive of those who joined the Local Defence Volunteers, already over a million.

The Army was Ready

"Two months ago," said Mr. Churchill in his broadcast on July 14, from which we have already quoted, "our first effort was to keep our best army in France. But now we have it at home; never before have we had in this island an army comparable to that which stands here on guard today. We have a million and a half men in the British Army under arms, and every week has seen their organization, defences, and striking power advance by leaps and bounds."

Following the successful evacuation of the great bulk of the B.E.F. from France, the task of preparing the army for the defence of Great Britain was placed in the hands of General Sir Edmund Ironside, who was promoted to Field-Marshal on July 19 (raised to the Peerage early in 1941). On the same day it was announced that General Lord Gort, who had commanded the B.E.F., had been appointed Inspector-General of the Forces for Training, while Lt.-General Sir Alan Brooke, G.O.C. Southern Command, was appointed C.-in-C. Home Forces, a position for which his recent experience as Commander of the 2nd Corps in France made him obviously suitable. General Brooke's place at the Southern Command was taken by Lt.-General C. J. E. Auchinleck.

Thus, day by day, the fortress of Britain grew in strength. Until now the threat of invasion had been lightly considered; it was regarded as perhaps a possibility, but a remote one. When France collapsed all that was changed. Men expected daily—even hourly—that the sky would be darkened by the wings of Hitler's armada, and that his great fleet of flat-bottomed boats would appear from across the sea, loaded to the gunwale with tanks and guns and walking arsenals of men. Never for a moment was the watch along the shore relaxed; every yard of sea was patrolled by ship or by aircraft. The channels were mined and the beaches covered with a swift growth of barbed wire. Gun emplacements sprang into being by the thousand, so that every line of approach could be covered by a devastating fire. Formidable blockhouses of steel and concrete were erected to command the foreshore; every road leading to the coast was barred with tank obstacles; and for miles back in the countryside roads and villages were covered by strong points. Deep ditches were carved across fields, or posts were erected so that they could provide the Nazis with no such easy landing-grounds as they had used to such fell advantage in Holland and in France. Aerodromes of the R.A.F. were strongly guarded by batteries of guns, and the squadrons of fighters and bombers were always on the alert ready to take the air at a moment's notice.

Every day, every hour, the defence belt was strengthened, and the front that faced the sea made more difficult and dangerous to approach. Through the long, wonderfully warm and sunny summer months the beaches, which in normal times would have been crowded with holiday-makers, were silent and deserted, for the coastal strip facing the Continent and extending some twenty





STRANGE MOUNTS FOR THE CAVALRY

The nickname "Ironsides," given to these fast, light armoured vehicles with which mechanized cavalry were equipped in the summer of 1940, was more than an apt description; it was a tribute to the gallant officer then commanding in chief the Home Forces, Field-Marshal Sir Edmund Ironside (left).

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Planet News











MULTIFOLD MEASURES FOR THE DEFENCE OF BRITAIN

In the summer of 1940 place names were obliterated on sign-posts and milestones; those on war memorials were blotted out, district and telephone exchange names on all sorts of public notices were removed. Boats and other river craft were immobilized or (as in the case illustrated above) stored at inland pools out of reach of an invader. If motorists failed to put standing cars out of action, police officers let out the air from tires (left). Police were armed with rifles in danger areas; the officer in the right-hand photograph is checking a civilian visitor's identity.

Photos, F. R. Winstone; Fox; Topical Press; "Daily Mirror"











TWENTY-MILE-WIDE MOAT THAT CHECKED THE NAZIS

With the Channel ports in their hands the Nazis pushed on feverishly with measures for the conquest of Britain. On August 13, 1940, their long-range guns on the French coast shelled Dover, and British guns (like that shown at left) replied in a duel that went on at intervals throughout the succeeding months. Across the water British and German sentries gazed in never-relaxing vigil.

Photos, Topical Press; Keystone; "New York Times"

miles inland was declared a Defence Area into which the public might not enter. But they were deserted only in appearance, not in fact. If the invader should actually come, then Britain's front line would blaze into action and guns from batteries that could be seen, and from more whose very existence (so carefully camouflaged were they) one would never have suspected, would rake with their fire the beaches and the adjoining waters.

As for the garrison—the hundreds of thousands, nay millions, of troops who were now gathered within the British Isles—it was trained to play its part in no war of static defence such as had so recently proved the undoing of the French with their Maginot complex. Rather it was seen, and saw itself, as a dynamic force. With its motorized and mechanized equipment the British Army was more mobile than any that had marched to war in all the centuries of the past—than Haig's or French's, than Wellington's or Marlborough's. Of the great host holding the British fortress, only those in the front line on the beaches and in the coastal batteries would be required in the event of an invasion to remain immovable and unmoved at the enemy's approach. Every effort was made to see that the divisions behind them were a hundred per cent mobile, ready to rush to this flank or that, wherever danger should threaten. Communication between 'planes and troops on the ground was developed until it approached perfection; armoured-car and motor-cycle

Well Trained Garrison

detachments were specially trained to give the quietus to parachutists descending from the sky; others were kept in a state of instant readiness to tackle troops unloaded from troop-carrying 'planes, or from vessels which might manage to evade the patrols and land their cargoes of men and material on some lonely shore. Then the closest cooperation was practised between the Regulars and the Local Defence Volunteers, or Home Guard, as they were renamed on July 23.

All through the months of summer the danger of invasion was very near. Indeed, what more suitable time could be chosen for launching Hitler's final offensive than when Britain was staggering beneath the blows of the defection of her Allies and the disasters of the battles of Flanders and France! With every morning there dawned the likelihood that today would see the invaders come, and with every nightfall the men responsible for the defence of Britain were infinitely grateful that another day had been granted them to make the defences of the beleaguered island more complete.

Hitler's armada of flat-bottomed craft did not sail, but his warplanes



TO BAFFLE AERIAL TROOP TRANSPORTS

During the summer and autumn of 1940 derelict hay-wains and broken-down farm wagons were lined up in big meadows where enemy aircraft might seek to land; across commons and parks were dug wide trenches, from which the soil was piled in heaps to break up the wide expanse of grass land.

Photos, Associated Press; Sport & General





ULTIMATUM TO JERSEY

In the last week of June, 1940, the Channel Islands were demilitarized and a great many of the inhabitants evacuated to England. The Royal Guernsey and the Jersey Militia (the latter seen above in training) in England were disbanded. In the centre is a reproduction of the ultimatum presented to the Governor of the Island of Jersey on July 1 by the Commander of the German Air Forces in Normandy.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Translation of a Communication addressed to the Governor of the Isle of Jersey.

1st July, 1940.

To the Chief of the Military and Civil Authorities

Jersey (St. Helier).

1. I intend to neutralize military establishments in Jersey by occupation.
2. As evidence that the Island will surrender the military and other establishments without resistance and without destroying them, a large White Cross is to be shown as follows, from 7 a.m. July 2nd, 1940.
   a. In the centre of the Airport in the East of the Island
   b. On the highest point of the fortifications of the port
   c. On the square to the North of the Inner Basin of the Harbour.
   Moreover all fortifications, buildings, establishments and houses are to show the White Flag.
3. If these signs of peaceful surrender are not observed by 7 a.m. July 2nd, heavy bombardment will take place.
   a. Against all military objects.
   b. Against all establishments and objects useful for defence.
4. The signs of surrender must remain up to the time of the occupation of the Island by German troops.
5. Representatives of the Authorities must stay at the Airport until the occupation.
6. All Radio traffic and other communications with Authorities outside the Island will be considered hostile actions and will be followed by bombardment.
7. Every hostile action against my representatives will be followed by bombardment.
8. In case of peaceful surrender, the lives, property, and liberty of peaceful inhabitants are solemnly guaranteed.

The Commander of the German Air Forces in Normandie,

__________ General

were active—the first civilian casualties were caused in a raid on the North Riding of Yorkshire on May 23, and the first aerial combat of the Battle of Britain took place over East Anglia on the night of June 18—and at midsummer the Germans succeeded in occupying British territory.

Evacuation of Channel Islands

The Channel Islands have been part of the realm of England since their Duke conquered England in 1066, but following upon the German occupation of the adjoining coasts of France it was now found necessary to evacuate them. Historically they were English to the core, but this was a case where geography defeated history. To defend them would have been difficult, perhaps impossible; the only result would have been useless slaughter and destruction. So towards the end of June it was announced that the Islands had been demilitarized, the evacuation of the armed forces—e.g. the Royal Jersey Militia crossed the Channel to take up its place somewhere on the coast—and of a considerable proportion of the population being announced at the same time. The announcement did not, however, save the Islands from cruel bombing, when the Germans, just before they landed by air on July 1, bombed and machine-gunned Jersey and Guernsey, 29 people being killed in the one island and 10 in the other. The administration of the islands was left largely in the hands of two officials, the Bailiffs of Jersey and of Guernsey, to whom King George addressed a personal message, the contents of which were made known on July 8.

"For strategic reasons," it read, "it has been found necessary to withdraw the armed forces from the Channel Islands. I deeply regret the necessity, and I wish to assure my people in the Islands that in taking this decision my Government have not been unmindful of their position. It is in their interest that this step should be taken in the present circumstances. The long association of the Islands with the Crown and the loyal service the people of the Islands have rendered to my ancestors and myself are guarantees that the link between us will remain unbroken. I know that my people in the Islands will look forward with the same confidence as I do to the day when the resolute fortitude with which we face our present difficulties will reap the reward of victory."

The abandonment of the Channel Islands was a sombre addition to the summer's events. But about the same time a new note of hopefulness was struck by the arrival in Britain of large numbers of fighting men from the Dominions "down under" and from across the Atlantic. Canadians, indeed, had been in the country for many months, and it was their fourth contingent which arrived in June. Amongst the newcomers were two units of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Their voyage across the Atlantic had been smooth and uneventful; and so, too, was that of the Australian and New Zealand forces who were brought halfway round the world under the sure shield of the Imperial Navies—of Britain and Australia, New Zealand and Canada—without the loss of a single man. As soon as the ships anchored they were visited by a party of Government and other official representatives who welcomed them, the first contingents of the new Anzacs to arrive in the United Kingdom.

"You come at a timely hour," was Mr. Eden's message as Secretary of State for War. "The cause of the free nations needs every measure of support that can be given. With Australia and New Zealand represented in two theatres of war, with Canada and South Africa taking their full part, we can now present to our enemy a truly imperial front—a front which, as he has learned from experience in the past, has never been and never will be broken by him."

Then a special message was read from the King. After recalling that a few months ago he had sent some words of welcome to the first contingents of the 2nd Australian Imperial Force and the New Zealand Expeditionary Force when they had then disembarked in the Middle East, his Majesty went on to say that:

"It has fallen to your lot to come to the United Kingdom itself, and as you take







NAZIS IN THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

Although demilitarization had been declared by Britain, the Nazis bombed and machine-gunned Jersey and Guernsey, and landed troops by air on July 1, 1940. Top, left, Nazi officers talking to a British official; right, German guard on harbour front at St. Peter Port; below, right, the swastika flies over Guernsey airport; left, a German officer in converse with a policeman in a St. Helier street.

Photos, E.N.A.







BRITAIN'S GARRISON REINFORCED

In the summer of 1940 large contingents of Australasian troops came to Britain. Top, Maoris from New Zealand at rifle practice. The N.Z. Expeditionary Force in Britain was commanded by Brigadier James Hargest, D.S.O., M.C. (centre, left).

Photos, Wide World; Elliott & Fry; P.N.A.; Sport & General



your place beside us you will find us in the forefront of the battle. To all I give a warm welcome, knowing the stern purpose that brings you from your distant homes."

Both contingents were led by Anzac veterans of the last war—Major-General H. D. Wynter and Brigadier J. Hargest, M.P., commanding the Australians and New Zealanders respectively. Among the New Zealanders was a Maori battalion with Maori officers, and this race was also represented in other units.

So high summer came and went, and still the invader tarried. Hitler raged and threatened, boasted and fulminated. Addressing the Reichstag on July 19 he made his famous prophecy, that:

"A great empire will be destroyed—an empire which it was never my intention to destroy or even to harm. I do, however, realize that this struggle, if it continues, can end only with the complete annihilation of one or the other of the two adversaries—Mr. Churchill may believe that this will be Germany. I know it will be Britain." Then, almost plaintively, he declared, "I see no reason why this war must go on. I am grieved to think of the sacrifices which it will claim."

A few days later Lord Halifax, Britain's Foreign Secretary, gave the Fuehrer his answer.

"Hitler has now made it plain," he said, "that he is preparing to direct the whole weight of German might against this country. That is why in every part of Britain, in great towns and remote villages alike, there is only one spirit, the spirit of indomitable resolution."

To Hitler the war seemed already won, and it was the very acme of perverseness on the part of the British people that they refused to acknowledge his victory. But Britain's confidence, tempered in the fires that burned so fiercely at Dunkirk, was yet further strengthened by the resolution of her sister states of the Commonwealth.

Smuts's Confidence

From every hand came expressions of goodwill, offers of service, and service itself. The Germans, said General Smuts in a broadcast on July 21 to Great Britain and the United States, held the view that the war was already won, and that only the final *coup de grâce* to Great Britain was awaited. "But," he went on, "the British people are today united as never before in their history under leadership of unrivalled brilliancy and courage. . . . Britain is and remains the inner core of the Allied cause—the main bastion of Allied defence . . . and the Germans have not won the war by any means, until they have overcome the main Allied force entrenched as it is in the island fortress of Britain." Then in a powerful passage he declared that: "If Dunkirk has any message for us, it is the heartening one that Britain will prove to be an impregnable fortress against which Germany's might will be launched in vain. If that attack fails, Hitler is lost; and all Europe, aye, the whole world, is saved."



BURLY AUSTRALIANS COME TO PLAY THEIR PART

Attracting notice by their stature and fine physique, the first troops from Australia arrived in Britain in June, 1940. Major-General H. D. Wynter, C.M.G., D.S.O. (centre, right), was G.O.C. Australian Forces in Britain. Above, changing sentries at Australia House, London.



THE PREMIER INSPECTS COASTAL DEFENCES

Mr. Winston Churchill gets first-hand knowledge of Britain's southern defences by a personal inspection. With him are General Sir Alan Brooke, K.C.B., D.S.O. (appointed C.-in-C. Home Forces in July, 1940) and Major-General G. Le Quesne Martel, a mechanization specialist who later in the year took command of the Royal Armoured Corps.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright



BRITAIN BECAME AN ISLAND FORTRESS

The top photograph (taken in July, 1940) shows a typical road block of concrete pillars, behind which the armed guard is examining the credentials of a passing motorist. Below, two of the village Home Guard are going on duty: the elder is a Boer War veteran and district postmaster; the horseman is a groom. Alongside is the salvage dump.

Photos, Associated Press; "News Chronicle"





PREPARING BRITAIN'S FIRST LINE OF DEFENCES

One of the first defensive steps taken after the Nazi occupation of the Channel ports was the fortification of the entire coastal region facing across the Straits. Similar measures were taken on other of our shores, and the beaches, promenade and pavements on the seaward side were banned to civilians. Here are photographs showing Brighton's empty promenade in July, 1940, contrasted with the busy scene some eighteen months earlier.

Photos, Fox





Photo, Fox

SOME OF THE FEW TO WHOM THE MANY OWED SO MUCH

In his review of the progress of the war, given in August, 1940, the Premier paid a remarkable tribute to the R.A.F. for their Herculean efforts in the defence of Britain. "Never in the field of human effort," he said, "was so much owed by so many to so few." Here are typical men of the R.A.F. Hurricane pilots on the airfield waiting to take off again for another tussle with the Nazis

'MEN WILL SAY, THIS WAS THEIR FINEST HOUR'

In a stirring oration in the House of Commons on June 18, 1940, Mr. Churchill reviewed the question of imminent invasion and summarized the means by which the enemy would be frustrated and thrown back from these shores. The greater part of the Prime Minister's speech is reprinted below, including the very moving peroration.

We have in arms at the present time in this island over 1,250,000 men. Behind these we have the Local Defence Volunteers, numbering 500,000, only a portion of whom, however, are yet armed with rifles or other firearms. We have incorporated into our defence forces every man for whom we have a weapon. We expect a very large addition to our weapons in the near future, and in preparation for this we intend to call up, drill, and train further large numbers at once. Those who are not called up or otherwise employed—those who are employed in the vast business of munitions production in all its branches, and which runs through every kind of grade—they serve their country best by remaining at their ordinary work until they are required.

We also have Dominion Armies here. Canadians had actually landed in France, but have now been safely withdrawn, much disappointed but in perfect order, with all their artillery and equipment; and these very high-class forces from the Dominions will now take part in the defence of the Mother Country. . . .

The invasion of Great Britain would, at this time, require transportation across the sea of hostile armies upon a very large scale, and, after they had been so transported, they would require to be continually maintained with all their mass of munitions and supplies which are required for continuous battle, as continuous battle it would be.

Here is where we come to the Navy. After all, we have a Navy. Some people seem to forget that. We must remind them. For more than thirty years I have been concerned in discussions about the possibility of overseas invasion, and I took the responsibility on behalf of the Admiralty at the beginning of the last war of allowing the Regular troops to be sent out of the country, though the Territorials had been only just called up and were quite untrained.

Navy's Part in Meeting Invasion

The Admiralty had confidence at that time in their ability to prevent mass invasion, even though at that time the Germans had a magnificent battle fleet in the proportion of 10 to 16, even though they were capable of fighting a general engagement any day and every day. Now they only have a couple of heavy ships worth speaking of.

We are also told that the Italian navy is to come to gain sea superiority in these waters. Well, if that is seriously intended, I can only say that we shall be delighted to offer Signor Mussolini free safeguarded passage through the Straits of Gibraltar in order that he may play the part he aspires to do. There is a genuine curiosity in the British Fleet to find out whether the Italians are up to the level they were at the last war or whether they have fallen off.

The point seems to be that so far as sea-borne invasion on a large scale is concerned we are far more capable of meeting it today than we were at many periods in the last war and during the early months of this war before our other troops were trained and while the B.E.F. was already abroad and still abroad.

The Navy have never pretended to be able to prevent raids by bodies of 5,000 or 10,000 men flung suddenly across at several points of the coast some dark night or foggy morning. The efficacy of sea-power, especially in modern conditions, depends upon the invading force being of large size. It has got to be of large size, in view of our military strength, to be of any use. If it is of large size the Navy have something they can meet and bite on. . . .

We also have a great system of minefields, recently largely reinforced, through which we alone know the channels. If the enemy tries to sweep vessels through those minefields it will be the task of the Navy to destroy the minesweepers or any other force employed to protect them.

These are the regular well-tested, well-proved arguments on which we have relied during the many years in peace and war. But the question is whether there are any new methods by which those solid assurances can be circumvented. Odd as it may seem, some attention has been given to this by the Admiralty, whose prime duty it is to destroy any large sea-borne expedition before it reaches us or at the moment it reaches these shores.

It would not be useful to go into details. All I would say is that untiring vigilance and mind-searching must be devoted to the subject, because the enemy is crafty, cunning, and full of novel treacheries and strategies.

The House may be sure that the utmost ingenuity is being displayed and imagination is being invoked from a large number of competent officers, well trained in planning and thoroughly up to date, to measure and to counter all novel possibilities, of which many are suggested. . . .

Glorious Mission of the R.A.F.

It seems quite clear that no invasion on a scale beyond the capacity of our land forces to crush speedily is likely to take place from the air until our Air Force has been definitely overpowered. In the meantime, there may be raids by parachute troops and attempted descents by air-borne soldiers. We ought to be able to give these gentry a warm reception both in the air and if they reach the ground in a condition to be able to continue the dispute.

The great question is, can we break Hitler's air weapon? It is a very great pity we have not got an air force at least equal to that of the most powerful enemy within reach of our shores, but we have a very powerful Air Force which has proved itself far superior, in quality, both of men and of many types of machines, to what we have met so far in the numerous fierce air battles which have been fought. . . .

I look forward confidently to the exploits of our fighter pilots, who will have the glory of saving their island home and all they love from the most deadly of all attacks.

There remains the danger of the bombing attacks, which will certainly be made very soon upon us by the bomber forces of the enemy. It is quite true that the German bomber force is superior in numbers to ours, but we have a very large bomber force also, which we should use to strike at military targets in Germany without intermission.

I do not at all underrate the severity of the ordeal which lies before us, but I believe our countrymen will show themselves capable of standing up to it like the brave men of Barcelona. They will be able to stand up to it and carry on in spite of it as well as any other people in the world. Much will depend on them, and every man and every woman will have the chance of showing the finest qualities of the race, and of rendering the highest services to their cause. . . .

What General Weygand called the "Battle of France" is over. I expect that the "Battle of Britain" is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of the Christian civilization. Upon it depends our own British life and the long-continued history of our institutions and our Empire.

The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us on this island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad and sunlit uplands. If we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, and all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new dark age made more sinister and perhaps more prolonged by the light of a perverted science.

Let us, therefore, do our duty and so bear ourselves that if the British Commonwealth and Empire lasts a thousand years men will still say, "This was their finest hour."

Historic Documents. CLXVIII

'THE WAR OF THE UNKNOWN WARRIORS'

On July 14, 1940, in a broadcast to the British Empire and America, Mr. Churchill once more affirmed his faith in the determination and ability of Britain to resist invasion if and when Hitler should attempt it. We give below the greater part of his confident and inspiring address.

ALL goes to show that the war will be long and hard. No one can tell where it will spread. One thing is certain—the peoples of Europe will not be ruled for long by the Nazi Gestapo, nor will the world yield itself to Hitler's gospel of hatred and domination.

And now it has come to us to stand alone at the breach and face the worst that the tyrant's might and enmity can do; bearing ourselves humbly before God, but conscious that we serve an unfolding purpose, we are ready to defend our native land against the invasion by which it is threatened. We are fighting by ourselves alone, but we are not fighting for ourselves alone.

Here in this strong city of refuge, which enshrines the title deeds of human progress and is of deep consequence to Christian civilization; here girt about by the seas and oceans where the Navy reigns, shielded from above by the staunchness and devotion of our airmen, we await undismayed the impending assault. Perhaps it will come tonight, perhaps it will come next week, perhaps it will never come. We must show ourselves equally capable of meeting a sudden violent shock or, what is perhaps a harder test, a prolonged vigil. But be the ordeal sharp or long, or both, we shall seek no terms, we shall tolerate no parley. We may show mercy—we shall ask none.

I can easily understand how sympathetic onlookers across the Atlantic, or anxious friends in the yet unravaged countries of Europe who cannot measure our resources or our resolve, may have feared for our survival when they saw so many states and kingdoms torn to pieces in a few weeks or even days by the monstrous force of the Nazi war machine.

But Hitler has not yet been withstood by a great nation with a will-power the equal of his own. Many of these countries have been poisoned by intrigue before they were struck down by violence. They have been rotted within before they were smitten without. How else can you explain what has happened to France, to the French Army, to the French people, to the leaders of the French people? But here in our island we are in good health and in good heart.

Hitler's Plans for the Doom of Europe

WE have seen how Hitler prepared in scientific detail the plans for destroying the neighbour countries of Germany. He had his plans for Poland and his plans for Norway; he had his plans for Denmark; he had his plans all worked out for the doom of the peaceful, trustful Dutch, and, of course, for the Belgians.

We have seen how the French were undermined and overthrown. We may therefore be sure that there is a plan, perhaps built up over years, for destroying Great Britain, which, after all, has the honour to be his main and foremost enemy. All I can say is that any plan for invading Britain which Hitler made two months ago must have had to be entirely recast to meet our new position.

Two months ago, nay, a month ago, our first and main effort was to keep our best Army in France; all our Regular troops, all our output of munitions, and a very large part of our Air Force had to be sent to France and maintained in action there. Now we have it all at home. Never before, in the last war or in this, have we had in this island an Army comparable in quality, equipment or numbers to that which stands here, on guard here, tonight.

We have 1,500,000 men now under arms tonight, and every week of June has seen their organization, their defences and their striking power advanced by leaps and bounds.

No praise is too high for the officers and men—aye, and the civilians—who have made this immense transformation in so short a time. Behind the soldiers of the Regular Army is the means for the destruction of parachutists, air-borne invaders, and any traitors who may be found in our midst—and I do not believe there are many—woe betide them. They will get short shrift.

Behind the regular Army we have more than 1,000,000 of the Local Defence Volunteers, or, as they are much better called, the Home Guard. These officers and men, a large proportion of whom have been through the last war, have the strongest desire to attack and come to close quarters with the enemy wherever he may appear.

Every Village Will Resist Invasion

SHOULD the invader come to Britain there will be no placid lying down of the people, no submission before him as we have seen, alas, in other countries. We shall defend every village, every town and every city. The vast mass of London itself, fought street by street, could easily devour an entire hostile army. We would rather see London laid in ashes and ruins than it should be tamely and abjectly enslaved. . . .

Around all lies the power of the Royal Navy, with over a thousand armed ships under the White Ensign patrolling the seas, the Navy which is capable of transferring its forces very readily to the protection of any part of the Empire which may be threatened, which is capable also of keeping open our communications with the New World from whom, as the struggle deepens, increasing aid will come.

Is it not remarkable after ten months of unlimited U-boat and air attacks upon our commerce, that our food reserves are higher than they have ever been and we have a substantially larger tonnage under our own flag, apart from hundreds of foreign ships, than we had at the beginning of the war?

Why do I dwell upon all this? Not surely to induce any slackening of effort or vigilance. On the contrary, this must be redoubled and we must prepare not only for the summer but for the winter, not only for 1941 but for 1942, when the war will, I trust, take a different form from the defensive in which it has hitherto been bound.

I dwell on these elements in our strength, on these reserves which we have mobilized, because it is right to show that the good cause can command the means of survival, and that while we toil through the dark valley we can see the sunlight on the uplands beyond.

I stand at the head of a Government representing all parties in the State, all creeds, all classes, every recognizable section of opinion. We are ranged beneath the Crown of our ancient Monarchy. We are supported by a free Parliament and a free Press. But there is one bond which unites us all and sustains us in the public regard—namely, as is increasingly becoming known, we are prepared to proceed to all extremities, to endure them, and to enforce them. That is our bond of union. For this bond we shall keep nothing back and we shall go to all lengths. Thus only, in times like these, can nations preserve their freedom; thus only can they uphold the cause entrusted to their care.

'Giving All, Daring All, Enduring All'

BUT all depends now upon the whole life-strength of the British race in every part of the world, and of all our associated peoples and of all our well-wishers in every land doing their utmost night and day, giving all, daring all, enduring all, to the utmost, to the end. This is no war of chieftains or of princes, of dynasties or national ambitions. It is a war of peoples and of causes.

There are vast numbers, not only in this island but in every land, who will render faithful service in this way, but whose names will never be known, whose deeds will never be recorded. This is the war of the Unknown Warriors. But let all strive without failing in faith or in duty and the dark curse of Hitler will be lifted from our age.

OPENING OF THE NAZI AIR OFFENSIVE: COUNTER-BOMBING BY THE R.A.F.

Air War During June and July, 1940: Sirens Sound in London—Two Months of Daily Attacks—Our Bomber Squadrons Strike—The Dortmund-Ems Canal—Bombs on the Ruhr—Incessant Attacks on Hamm—Work of the Coastal Command—Nazi Raids on Convoys—Fleet Air Arm Bombs Kiel—Mediterranean Incidents—Malta Stands Fast—Poor Performance of the Regia Aeronautica

After the capitulation of France it was anticipated in many quarters that the full force of the Luftwaffe would be thrown immediately against England. The fine weather which for weeks had been in Hitler's favour continued, and Britain stood ready for the long-expected assault.

In those critical weeks of June the enemy carried out widespread and heavy attacks at night over Britain, but these were not on the scale which many had visualized. On the night of June 24-25 the sirens sounded in London for the first time since September, 1939. From that date until the end of July Air Ministry communiqués reported enemy day and night attacks practically every day. Then, as now, the bombing for the most part appeared to be indiscriminate and futile, and it is obvious that one purpose of these raids was the undermining of the morale of the British public. Further evidence that this was the case was provided by the enemy in using "screaming" bombs, those missiles which he had found so effective in striking terror into the Belgian, Dutch and French peasantry in the past. There were cases, too, of machine-gunning civilians from the air. All these efforts of frightfulness were in vain. The people of Britain were angered; they were whipped into a mood of keener awareness and preparedness. But they were not cowed.

Meanwhile, the striking power of the R.A.F. Bomber Command was being geared up, and after that long period in the opening phase of the war when operations were restricted to reconnaissance flights and "leaflet" raids over Germany, the enemy was feeling the growing force of the British air arm.





WEAPON OF NAZI FIRE-RAISERS

Thousands of 1-kilogramme incendiaries like that at the right were dropped by Nazi raiders during the summer of 1940 and after. Many fell in open ground and their tails were collected (above) for scrap.

Photos, British Official; Crown Copyright; Fox

By July 31 the Bomber Command had carried out, during a period of three months, 258 attacks on military objectives, including harbours, ammunition dumps, and docks; 238 against enemy aerodromes and seaplane bases; and 275 against railways, canals, strategic roads and marshalling yards. There were also 61 raids on industrial centres, and in all over 1,000 attacks were made on Germany and territory occupied by the enemy.

One of the outstanding raids was that carried out on the Dortmund-Ems Canal. Here, as in other raids, meticulous care was taken in the preparations. Reconnaissance aircraft had previously made flights over the area; the Bomber Command had in its possession first-hand details and photographs of the canal, and the disposition of ground defences for many miles around it. From these, scale models were made, and the pilots and crews of the Handley-Page Hampden bombers selected for the initial attack studied them so as to familiarize themselves with the target area.

This preparatory work was essential, since the Dortmund-Ems Canal at the



SHELTERS SAVED THOUSANDS

Corrugated steel Anderson shelters were distributed free to working class householders. Installed in back gardens they saved many lives. Photo shows a woman being helped up from a shelter after a bomb had wrecked the adjacent bungalow

Photo, Keystone

spot selected for the assault had few distinguishing features. How useful these preliminaries were was vouched for by the pilots who later made the attack: without the photographs and models, they said, it would have been extremely difficult to pin-point the target.

The first raid was carried out on a bright moonlight night, when bombs were dropped on the aqueduct, the canal embankment, side ponds and safety gates. The enemy, fully aware of the vulnerability of the waterway at the point, had established a very large number of A.A. batteries and searchlights all round the aqueduct, but in spite of intense opposition the Hampdens pressed home their attack. How completely successful it had been was shown in photographs taken from the air on the following day. In the aqueduct there was no water to be seen,





and many barges were shown lying in the mud of the canal, while their cargoes were being unloaded into nearby fields.

This raid, and many others which followed it, were part of the plan of the Bomber Command to strike at all enemy communications wherever and whenever possible. The canals of Germany were very extensively used for the transport of goods, and it was calculated that by striking at vulnerable points of these waterways, such as lock gates, power houses, ship-lifts and aqueducts, the system could be seriously disrupted. The Nazis, for their part, employed special units of the German Labour Corps to repair the damage done by R.A.F. raids, so that it was a continual duel between the bombers and repair parties.

German railways, too, were attacked with increasing intensity by British bombers during the weeks following the collapse of France. The huge marshalling yard at Hamm in the Ruhr District was bombed again and again. This target with its 40 tracks was undoubtedly one of greatest importance, for a vast amount of coal, iron ore, steel and timber passed through en route for munition factories in Eastern Germany and elsewhere. Marshalling yards at Mannheim, Grembburg, Soest, Wanne-Eickel and Schwerte, oil refineries at Gelsenkirchen, Hamburg, Misburg, Emmerich and Bremen, and aircraft factories at Kassel, Deichshausen, and Bremen were among many other objectives bombed by British airmen during July, 1940.

But in addition to these raids on Germany itself, the Bomber Command and Coastal Command were busy over occupied territory in that eventful month of tense developments. Day after day Bristol Blenheims swept down over ports, canals and harbours in Holland, Belgium and France to smash up concentrations of barges, tugs and other vessels; day after day they went out and returned with reports and photographs of their work, and bearing with them evidence of the enemy's intentions—which, as subsequent events conclusively proved, were the invasion of Britain. Over Norway and along the Norwegian coast our aircraft did valuable and hazardous work. By July 5 the whole of Germany's coastline and that of Norway had been sealed with mines dropped by the R.A.F. For twelve weeks Bomber Command squadrons had crossed the North Sea every night to carry out this task.

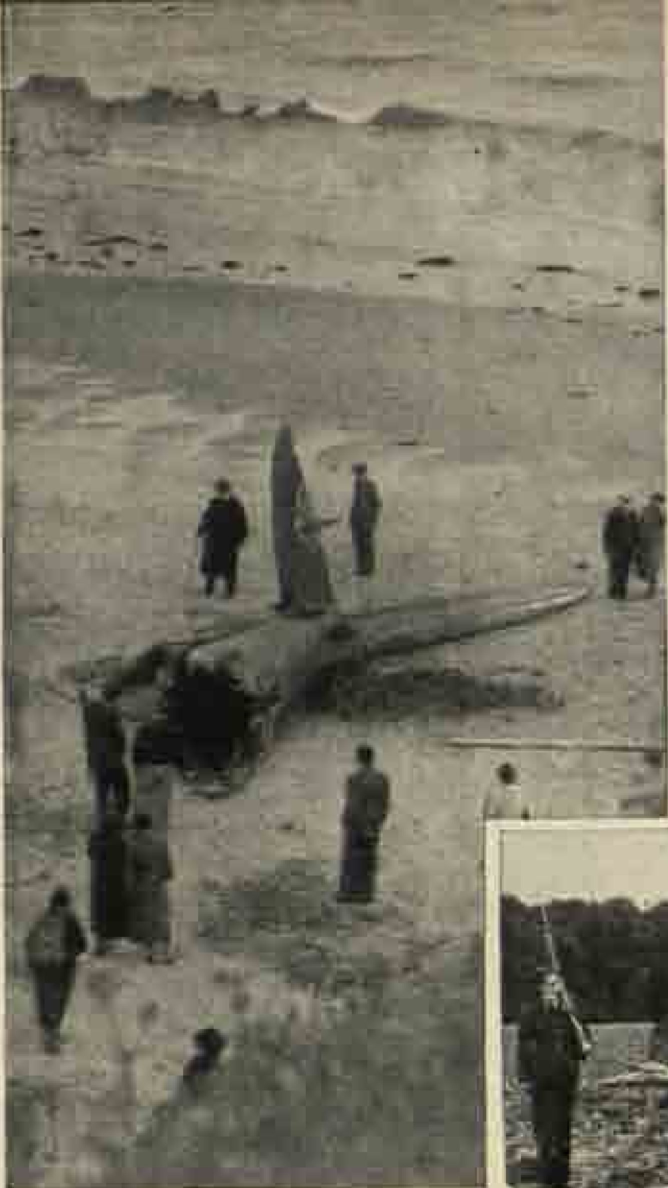
The air war over the sea around Great Britain grew more intense and more widespread. The enemy, having achieved great success with his Ju 87 dive-bombers in the "Battle of France," was confident that these same machines would prove as effective against our ships. The first large-scale attack on British shipping occurred on July 10, when dive-bombers (said to number a hundred) made a concerted attack on a convoy off the S.E. coast (*see* pp. 1058-9). Yet, in spite of their numbers, the enemy failed to obtain one hit.



AIR OFFENSIVE AGAINST BRITAIN

After the middle of June, 1940, Nazi bombers raided Britain more frequently, and on July 1 they began to come over in daylight. These photographs show the parish church of Dibden, on Southampton Water, gutted after a bomb had fallen (June 18-19); an injured survivor from a Dornier bomber brought down in flames in mid-July; and a rescue party at work after a raid on Dover at the end of that month.

Photos, Topical Press; "Daily Mirror;" Planet News





NAZI RAIDERS DESTROYED IN BRITAIN

Gigantic scrap heaps were needed to accommodate German aircraft shot down during the summer of 1940. Here are seen some of the casualties: top, left, near Ramsgate (June 18–19); above, a bullet-riddled Dornier Do 17 (July 3); immediately below, a Me 110 fighter-bomber (end of July); lower left, a Me 109 fighter shot down on the S.E. coast in June; lower right, a bomber which crashed in Suffolk, June 8.

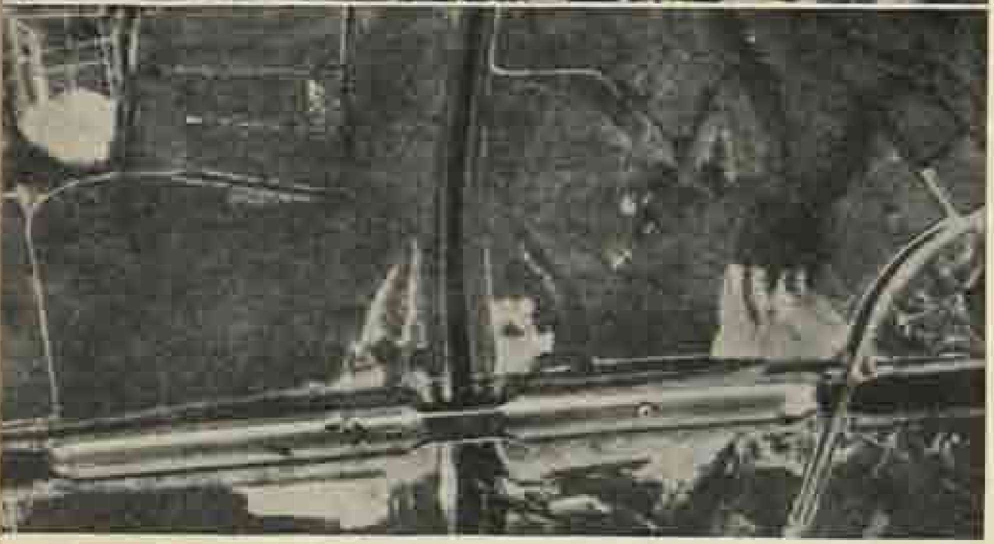
Photos, "Daily Mirror"; Planet News; G.P.U.; Keystone













THE CANAL THEY DESTROYED

Three bombing attacks were made on the Dortmund-Ems Canal during June, 1940, three in July and one in August. The photographs left show the aqueduct over the Ems before and after one of our July raids : the lower picture reveals it empty of water, with bomb craters in its bed. For his accurate low-bombing attack on this objective during August, Flight-Lieut. Learoyd (above) was awarded the V.C. Below is a street in Hanover after an R.A.F. raid.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright ; P.N.A. ; Associated Press



But ten German aircraft were lost and were seen to plunge into the sea as a result of accurate fire from A.A. guns on some of the vessels and the work of R.A.F. fighters.

True to tradition, the Germans repeated these attempts again and again in spite of their lack of success and their own losses. Flying over the North Sea, Nazi airmen began to attack every unescorted vessel they could find. They would dive down and machine-gun the decks of trawlers, fishing smacks and lightships. There was at least one instance reported in which an R.A.F. motor-boat engaged in rescuing the crew of a wrecked German aeroplane was blindly gunned. A counter-measure was quickly instituted: fishing vessels and other small craft were equipped with Lewis guns, and immediately afterwards a considerable number of attackers were shot down. Messerschmitt Me 110s were used extensively in these attacks, and on one occasion four were intercepted by a Coastal Command Avro Anson. Though greatly inferior in speed and armament, this reconnaissance monoplane shot down one of the enemy.

The Coastal Command squadrons which had done such fine work in the early months of the war, often in appalling weather conditions, continued to operate with magnificent effectiveness. The Short Sunderland four-engined flying boats, with their range of 2,880 miles, were constantly at work far out over the Atlantic and the North Sea seeking out U-boats and attacking them with bombs.

Coastal Command Exploits

There were occasions, too, when these huge machines revealed their power to attack and beat enemy aeroplanes, so disproving the theory that the ultra-large, unwieldy aircraft makes a poor showing in battle. The Sunderland's ability to protect itself in combat was clearly due to its well-disposed armament. With a gun turret in the nose and in the tail, and with two gun positions amidships, its crew of six had an unusually fine field of fire.

In several actions over enemy-occupied territory the Coastal Command worked in close cooperation with the Fleet Air Arm. On July 2 R.A.F. and F.A.A. aircraft carried out a combined attack on the aerodrome near Rotterdam and on Nazi barges in the canals, doing heavy damage. And on the same day a report was made available of a successful attack on the Kiel naval base, where the battleship "Scharnhorst" and a floating dock were bombed (see illus. p. 1089). It was in July that the Fleet Air Arm's fighter-dive-bomber, the Blackburn Skua, came into prominence. Aircraft of this type (a low-wing monoplane powered with a Bristol Perseus engine of 905 h.p.) were employed in a daring attack on Bergen (see illus. p. 1131).



A NAZI VERSION OF THE EARLY ATTACKS ON BRITAIN

Reproduced from the American magazine "Time," and compiled solely from information obtained from enemy sources, this map can be taken as showing Nazi aims in the Luftwaffe's attacks during the period June 18—July 21 before the intense attacks of August and September, which came to be known officially as the Battle of Britain.

As the air war over Britain and Germany, over the Atlantic, the North Sea and the Channel became more violent, so did air action accelerate over the Mediterranean. Mussolini's much-vaunted Regia Aeronautica made repeated but ineffective raids on Malta, and Aden and Alexandria were bombed. On June 29 a minor sensation was created when Reuter stated that Marshal Balbo, Governor-General of Libya, had been killed in an air fight over Tobruk on the previous day. There were ten



others in his aeroplane, which crashed in flames. The Italians reported that the Marshal was vanquished by an R.A.F. pilot in combat, but a Foreign Office statement revealed that investigations had been made and had conclusively proved that no British aircraft had been concerned in Balbo's death. The statement added: "His death in an unexplained aeroplane disaster recalls similar accidents in the past, in particular the death at Warsaw of General von Fritsch, the opponent of Hitler's home and foreign policy."

Over Libya, notably at Tobruk and Sidi Barrani, Blenheim bombers and Gladiator biplane fighters were constantly meeting Italian squadrons, and on every occasion the British airmen showed their superiority, though they were nearly always outnumbered.

The poor display of Italian pilots, a feature of the air war in the Middle East





OPPOSED R.A.F. IN LIBYA

The Savoia-Marchetti S-79 bomber (top) has a range of over 1,000 miles and a top speed of 270 m.p.h. The Fiat BR-20 (centre), steel armoured and having a speed of some 30 m.p.h. more, is one of the most efficient of Mussolini's bombers. Below is shown the Fiat CR-42 fighter, a biplane much used in Libya, with a speed of 270 m.p.h.

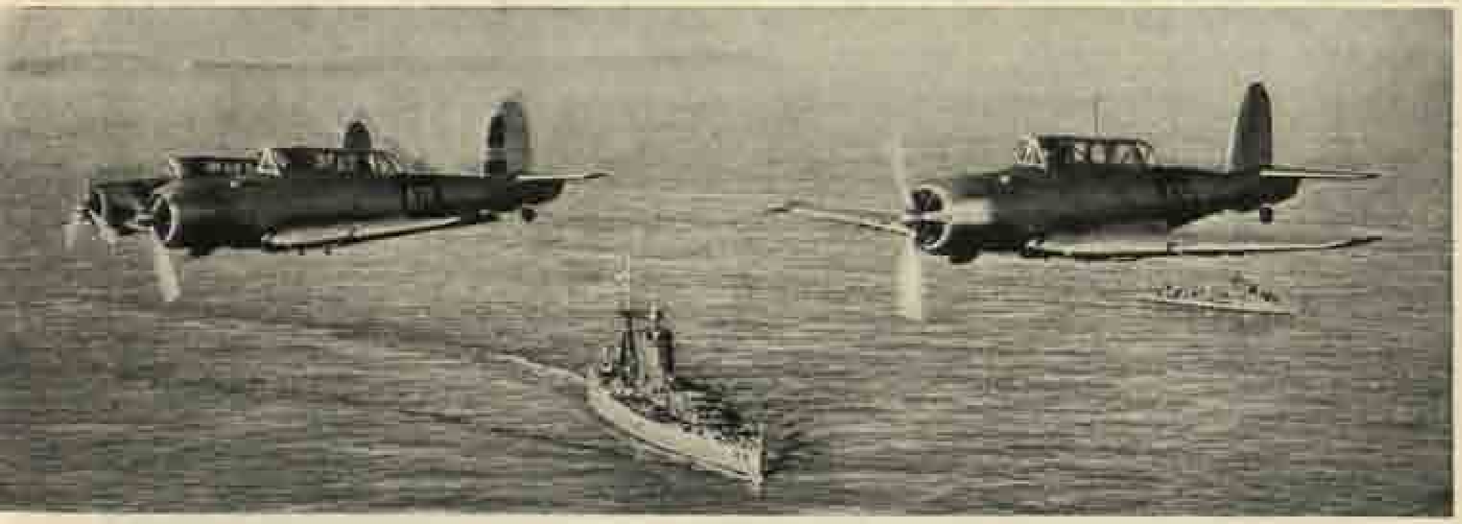
Photos, Camera Talks; Keystone; "Flight"

at this period, can be attributed largely to their equipment. Their standard fighter was the Fiat CR-42, a biplane with a performance and armament wholly inadequate even when opposed by the obsolescent Gloster Gladiator biplane. The CR-42 had good manoeuvrability but its top speed was only 270 m.p.h. and it was armed with two slow-firing machine-guns. The Savoia-Marchetti S-79 and the Fiat BR-20 bombers, many of which were destroyed in Libya, were machines of no exceptional performance, though they were well built and moderately well armed.

By June 30, 1940, Malta had been raided 50 times. By July 3 the Italians had lost 60 aircraft in the Middle East, and a further 25 probably destroyed in air combats and on the ground.

Over the Mediterranean the Fleet Air Arm was constantly in action during July. Naval Swordfish aircraft attacked enemy warships in the harbour at Tobruk and at Augusta in Sicily. They also bombed an Italian aerodrome at Cagliari, Sardinia. In these operations the R.A.F. and F.A.A. displayed a marked superiority in fighting spirit and equipment. It was the same at home. During the period June 18–August 5 the Germans lost 307 aircraft in raids on Britain, while the R.A.F. losses were 172. From June 15 until July 15 the Nazis dropped 7,000 bombs on England, while the R.A.F. dropped 33,000 on Germany and Nazi-occupied territory. These raids, on both sides, were but a prelude to air actions that followed. Progressively the enemy was throwing more fighters and more bombers against Britain, and in the Middle East the Italians were showing a steady increase of activity. Outnumbered on all fronts, the R.A.F. nevertheless struck hard and often, and more than held its own in daytime defence. But with the threat of invasion growing ever more imminent, and Britain's hold in the air still in the balance, the most urgent need was for more machines, more pilots and more crews.





IN ACTION AGAINST ITALY

Top, a Handley Page Hampden is seen against the dawn sky as it returns from a raid on Berlin. The Bristol Blenheim Mk. IV high-speed fighter-bomber (right) did fine work in the Middle East, as well as nearer home. Blackburn Skuas (centre, flying over H.M.S. 'Nelson') were largely employed by the Fleet Air Arm.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; C. E. Brown; Keystone



ITALY AT WAR: FIRST RESULTS OF MUSSOLINI'S BLUNDERS

Brief 'Campaign' Against France—Crippling Blows by the R.A.F. in Libya—The 'Moonstone's' Prize—Brush in the Ionian Sea—H.M.A.S. 'Sydney' destroys the 'Bartolomeo Colleoni'—Effect of French Collapse: British Forces Draw Back from the Frontiers in Libya, Sudan and Kenya: Abandonment of British Moyale; Capture of Gallabat and Kassala—Italian Invasion of Somaliland—The Evacuation from Berbera

For nine months Britain and France had been at war with Germany. Now, when France was reeling beneath the hammer blows of Hitler's armoured columns, when the fate of the Battle of France was already decided, and when it seemed beyond a doubt that when France collapsed Britain's downfall could not be long delayed—at that fateful hour Mussolini decided that the time had come for Italy to play jackal to Germany's wolf. So at six o'clock on the evening of June 10 he appeared on the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia in Rome, and in a mood of roaring bellicosity bellowed out the news that a declaration of war had been handed to the ambassadors of Britain and France, "those plutocratic and reactionary democracies of the west," as he styled them. "Proletarian and Fascist Italy is on her feet," he shouted. "We have only one watchword. This word is already in the air and is burning in Italian hearts from the Alps to the Indian Ocean—to conquer."

Mussolini dreamed of a war that was to be short and sharp. Already he tasted in anticipation the cup of victory, and the taste was sweet. He expected that his soldiers would have to do little or no fighting, and that his fleet would be able to dominate a Mediterranean from which Britain's warships had been withdrawn to defend her beleaguered isles. Even after a state of war came into being between France and Italy it was ten days before the Italian troops crossed the frontier in the Alps, and even then, opposed though they were to the army of an almost prostrate nation, their progress was inconsiderable. A few villages were occupied, there was what Mussolini described as a "hard and bloody" battle with "thousands of casualties," and, to quote the Rome wireless commentator, "after several days of tireless fighting against enormous odds, our gallant troops entered the fortified town of Mentone" (see page 981). But soon after midnight on June 25 the fighting—the Italian accounts were beyond a doubt grossly exaggerated—was ended by the Franco-Italian Armistice (see page 1021). Italy's war with France was at an end; not so, however, her war with Britain.

Britain's First Blows

To Mussolini's surprise, chagrin, increasing disgust and, eventually (we may well believe), consternation, Britain not only kept on fighting, but, as the weeks passed, increased the weight of her blows.

At the very beginning of the struggle the British showed little sign of being sterile or decadent—to mention just two of the many derogatory adjectives with which Fascist mouths were then filled. As we have seen, ten days elapsed between Italy's declaration of war against France and the delivery of the first Italian attack in the Alps. Not as many hours had elapsed before Britain delivered her first blows on

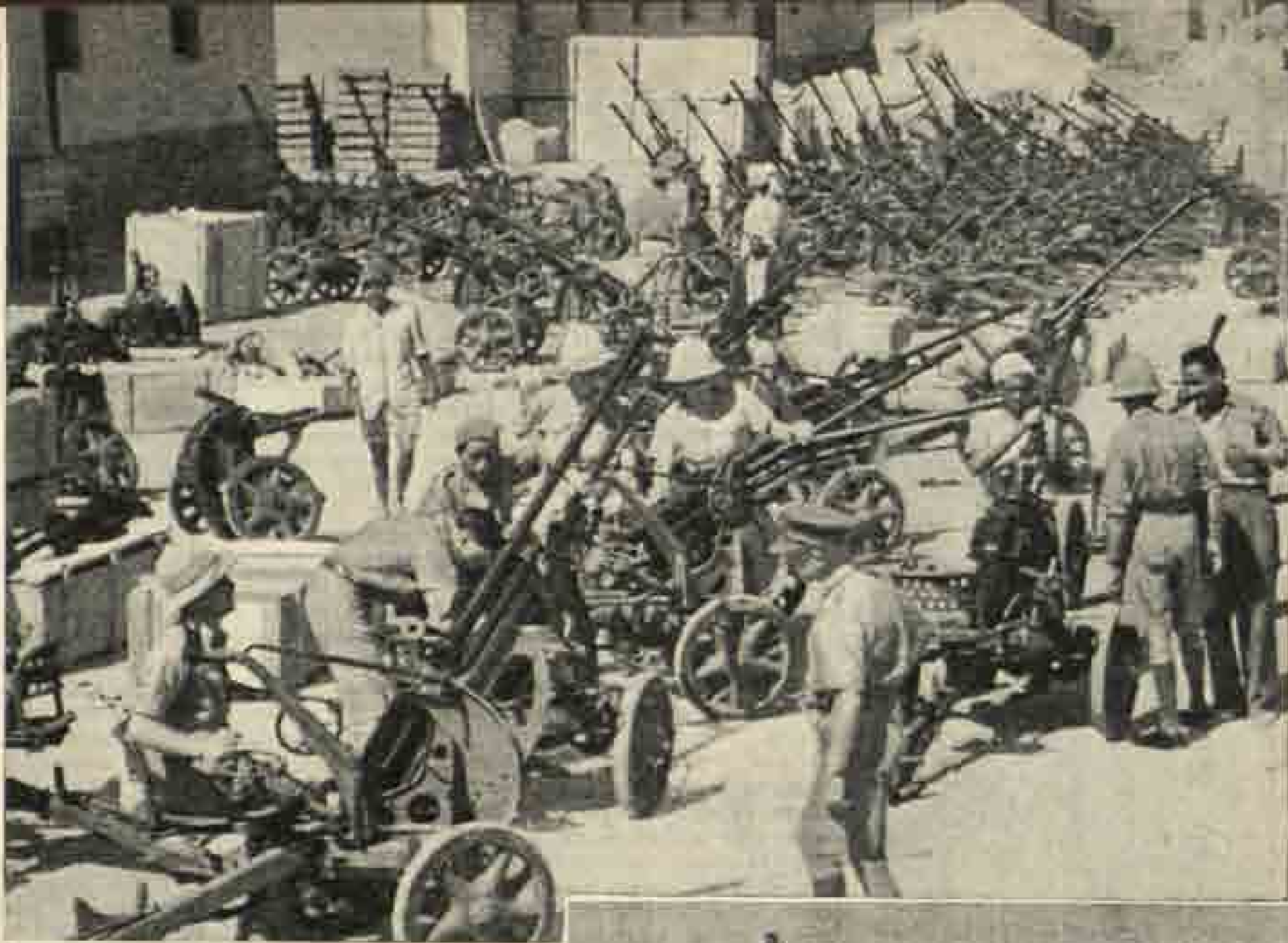




MUSSOLINI VISITS THE 'BATTLE' FRONT

After the way to a bloodless advance had been opened by the collapse of France before German armies at the end of June, 1940, Italian troops entered French territory, and are seen here in the French Riviera. Right, Mussolini, with Marshal Badoglio, made a tour of the Alpine Front

Photos, E.N.A.; Associated Press



SWIFT ACTION AGAINST ITALY

Though strategy later dictated a slower pace, Britain was swift to move against the Italians in Libya. On June 14, 1940, Fort Maddelena (right) was captured, and the photograph below shows a British shell bursting there. Some of the war material taken by our troops in operations at about this date is seen above; below, right, are native prisoners under British guard.

Photos, British Paramount News; Movietone and Gaumont Newsreel.









LESSON LEARNT FROM NAZIS

After Italy entered the war she seized British and French ships in Italian ports. Many of her own merchant ships in Allied ports were scuttled, as this one at Gibraltar

Photo, Sport and General

her newly-declared enemy. At dawn on the very first day of the war (Tuesday, June 11) the R.A.F., so it was announced in Cairo that evening, carried out bombing attacks on concentrations of enemy bombing aircraft, petrol depots, and bomb dumps, located at Italian military aerodromes in East Libya and Italian East Africa. The aerodromes attacked in East Libya were the principal Italian air bases threatening Egypt and the east part of the Libyan Desert, while those in East Africa were the main Italian air bases threatening our Red Sea communications and the Sudan. Then at dawn on June 12 Tobruk, the principal Italian naval base in Libya, was subjected to air and sea bombardment, extensive damage being caused to a number of enemy vessels, including the cruiser "San Giorgio" (*see* illus. page 1087), which was set on fire, and two submarines. The R.A.F. shared the glory of these first offensive strokes with their comrades of the South African Air Force, whose heavy bombers that same first morning of the war raided Italian Moyale on the Kenya-Abyssinian frontier, and subjected a number of military objectives to heavy bombing. The Italian Regia Aeronautica retaliated by bombing British Moyale and by a series of air raids on Malta, which soon became one of the most frequently bombed outposts of the British Empire. Aden, too, had its baptism of fire on June 12.

"As a result of these initial strokes, Italy's striking power in the Middle East," declared Air Vice Marshal Sir Archibald Longmore, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East Command of the R.A.F., "was crippled, the Italian aircraft and ground defences having been taken by surprise by the swiftness of the attacks."

In North-East Africa Italian aircraft bombed Sollum, Sidi Barrani, and Mersa Matruh—all in Egyptian territory. On land the first operations took place on the Libyan frontier in the early hours of June 13, when a British armoured patrol crossed the frontier from Egypt, and surprised and captured an Italian outpost.

A day or two later there was an encounter in the desert south-east of Sollum, in which a number of Italian tanks were ambushed by a British force; 12 enemy tanks were captured, together with seven guns and 600 prisoners. Before the month was out British troops operating from their base in Egypt were reported to be in control of some 3,500 square miles of Italian Libya; for 150 miles from the Mediterranean coast to below Jarabub they pushed out their armoured patrols, which ranged here and there across the desert, seeking to probe the Italian defences and to harass the force which Marshal Balbo was believed to be assembling in preparation for the much-advertised march into Egypt.

On the sea, too, Britain was swift to strike. The war was not a day old when Mr. Attlee rose to announce in the House of Commons that already 14 Italian ships had been seized, ten others were in British ports, and three "on the best German model" had been scuttled. With relentless vigour the Italian ships were rapidly cleared from the western basin of the Mediterranean, while even in the eastern the enemy's prospects were far from rosy, what with the challenge to her communications in Albania, Libya and the Dodecanese Islands thrown out by Admiral Cunningham's powerful fleet at Alexandria.

In the first week of war four Italian submarines were destroyed, and at the beginning of July it was announced that 14 had met their doom in 20 days. On the other hand, the Italians could claim the sinking by one of their submarines of H.M. cruiser "Calypso", whose loss was announced by the Admiralty on June 15.

Many of the enemy submarines were destroyed by flying-boats attached to the Middle East Command, but one, Galileo Galilei (photographs, pp. 1081 and 1093.)





THE MYSTERY OF MARSHAL BALBO

An Italian announcement stated that Marshal Balbo had been killed during an air battle over Libya on the evening of June 28, 1940; later information gave Tobruk as the locality. But there had been no combat involving British aircraft at that time and place, and so the matter became a mystery. Above, the funeral procession in Tripoli (portrait of Balbo, inset)

Photos, Associated Press; Keystone





ASPECTS OF EARLY WAR IN LIBYA

Though the French defection made a withdrawal from the Libyan-Egyptian frontier inevitable, for two months all the fighting was on the Italian side of the border. Some of our prisoners are seen above, left. Right, British soldiers digging out survivors after Italians had bombed a desert dug-out.
Photos, Movietone Newsreel; British Paramount News

was captured by one of our naval trawlers. (The story is told in Chapter 104, where are fuller details of the naval side of the war with Italy.) Then on July 9 there was a skirmish between the battle fleets. Admiral Cunningham, Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, had ordered a sweep of both the western and eastern basins with a view to discovering the whereabouts of Mussolini's navy and, if possible, of bringing it to battle. One force, based at Gibraltar, including H.M.S. "Hood" and H.M.S. "Ark Royal," carried out a sweep towards the central Mediterranean, and although it encountered heavy air attacks by Italian bombers, it met with no opposition from the enemy's surface ships. Simultaneously, another force (under Admiral Cunningham himself) was conducting a similar reconnaissance in the Ionian Sea to the west of Crete, and during the morning of July 9 it sighted an enemy force, consisting of two battleships, a large number of cruisers and some 25 destroyers. Early in the afternoon contact was established by the two forces, but after a brief period of intense fire the Italian ships made off to their bases as soon as they came within extreme range of the British battleships. They were pursued until the coast of Italy came within sight, and one of the Italian battleships was hit and a submarine and the destroyer "Zeffiro" were sunk (*see* map and photographs in page 1091). Extravagant claims were made by Mussolini—an aircraft carrier had been "rendered motionless" by a bomb and "one ship, probably a battleship, was sunk": but, in fact, no hits were made by bomb or shell on the British ships.

Ten days later came the news of another British success against the Italian fleet. About 7.30 a.m. on July 19 H.M.A.S. "Sydney," accompanied by a small destroyer force, tackled two Italian cruisers north-west of Crete. The enemy ships endeavoured to escape to the south-west, but the "Sydney's" fire was so accurate that one of them, the six-inch-gun cruiser "Bartolomeo Colleoni," was hit in a vital spot (see photograph in page 1082) and forced to reduce speed, after which British destroyers sent her to the bottom. The second cruiser received several hits in the chase, but her superior speed saved her from a like fate.

The collapse of France entirely altered the military outlook in the Middle East, where British forces were under the command of Major-General Sir Archibald Wavell. General Wavell had counted upon the support of French forces (much superior in number to the British Imperial troops) for the coming offensive against Italy in North and





ITALY'S OVERSEA TERRITORIES

This map shows the colonies of Italy at the outbreak of the Second Great War, and covers the regions dealt with in the present chapter.

East Africa, and when the French defeat took away all hope of such support it became imperative for our troops to be withdrawn from the political borders to back lines of greater strategic value. Thus, on the eastern frontier of the Sudan and the northern frontier of Kenya ground was relinquished to the enemy, and a similar strategic withdrawal took place also in Libya.

While in North Africa the Italians proceeded with their preparations for the invasion of Egypt—they were now under the command of Marshal Graziani, for Marshal Balbo had died in mysterious circumstances when his 'plane crashed over Tobruk on June 28—some 1,500 miles to the south there was launched an offensive against the British positions in the Sudan and Kenya. The first objective was British Moyale, against which an attack was delivered on June 28. This was driven off, but the Italians attacked again on July 1 and the following day: again there was a successful counter-attack by the little garrison of the King's African Rifles. On July 5 and again on July 9 the fort was heavily shelled, and finally on the night of July 14 the defenders were withdrawn to join the relief force which had made their withdrawal possible.

In Italy the capture of this little frontier post was hailed as a momentous victory; but with far more reason the Italians could congratulate themselves on their occupation on July 3 of the Sudanese town of Kassala, near the frontier of Eritrea, for Kassala was a town of some importance, with a population of 6,000 and a station on the railway linking Khartoum with Port Sudan on the Red Sea; thus one of the most important of the British lines of communication in that region was temporarily cut. On the same day Gallabat, on the frontier but 175 miles farther to the south, was captured by the Italians; and four days later Kurmuk, 220 miles to the south-west of Gallabat beyond the Blue Nile, shared the same fate.

These captures were taken to herald the opening of a campaign of imperial conquest undertaken by the large Italian forces in East Africa, which were reported to amount to 250,000 men.

During those anxious weeks when the British fortress in the North Sea was believed to be in imminent danger of invasion there was a very real concern for our position in East Africa. It was



BEFORE GALLABAT FELL

The frontier post of Gallabat, in the Sudan, near the Abyssinian border, was occupied by Italian troops on July 3, 1940. Above, while still in British hands, the Union Jack and the Egyptian flag fly side by side on Gallabat fort.

Photo, Wide World





OUTPOST ON KENYA BORDER

The same reasons that enforced a withdrawal elsewhere in the Middle East, after the collapse of French support, brought about the abandonment of British Moyale, on the Kenya-Abyssinia border, early in July, 1940. Above, Moyale Fort; right, an Italian flag captured at El Wak. Captain D. J. N. C. Henderson (wearing Glengarry) commanded a company of King's African Rifles which held Moyale for some days against overwhelming numbers of the enemy.

Right-hand photo: British Official



thought highly probable that the Italians might launch a really large-scale offensive westwards against the Sudan, combined with another to the south directed against Uganda and Kenya. Those offensives were actually begun at Kassala, Moyale and the rest, but they were short-lived and altogether ineffectual owing to the stern resistance put up by the Imperial forces gathered along the frontier of Mussolini's African realm. In particular, high tribute must be paid to the South African Mobile Field Force and the South African Air Force, who had taken up their positions in Kenya before war began. Outnumbered as they were at the beginning of the struggle, the defenders put up a magnificent show, and ere long they were able to assume the offensive, recapture the slight gains which the Italians had made, and carry the war into the enemy's country.

That day had not yet arrived, however, and before it could dawn the Italians were able to boast of the conquest of one of Britain's colonial possessions. On August 4 a considerable Italian force invaded British Somaliland from Abyssinia. They crossed the frontier in three columns, aiming at the towns, or rather collections of huts, of Oadweina, Hargeisa, and Zeila. Zeila, adjacent to French Somaliland, was abandoned to the enemy on August 5, as it was too far removed from the main British positions to send troops for its defence; before France's collapse it had been planned that it should be defended by the French operating from Jibuti. On the same day a strong enemy force—the invaders were reported to have at their disposal some 8,000 or 10,000 men, well equipped with artillery, tanks and aircraft—occupied Hargeisa. The British fought a delaying action and inflicted severe casualties on the enemy before they withdrew into the interior; their own losses were inconsiderable. Oadweina was taken by the invaders on August 6, their advance being harassed by a small motorized force of the Somaliland Camel Corps.

After the capture of their first objectives the enemy columns halted for a day or two, but on August 9 they were again reported to be advancing northwards. On August 11 they made contact with the principal British force, under Brig.-Gen. A. R. Chater, which had now taken up defensive positions covering the Tugaga Pass at the foot of the plateau of the Golis. The Italians





SOMALILAND WAS RELINQUISHED FOR THE TIME

Owing to the loss of French support only weak British forces could meet the Italian columns that invaded British Somaliland on August 4 (see maps in page 1138). Lieut. (Acting Capt.) E. C. T. Wilson (top, left) died fighting his machine-guns in the hills and was posthumously awarded the V.C. The main British Force was commanded by Brig.-Gen. A. R. Chater (below, right). Above, units of the South African Mobile Field Force moving up to the front line

Photos, 'Daily Mirror'; Fox; Elliott & Fry

opened their main onslaught on Sunday, August 11, subjecting the troops occupying the Iugaga lines and the reserve positions to heavy bombing and machine-gunning. At noon the Italian infantry, Blackshirts for the most part, went over the top and the battle continued all day, even into the hours of dark. The defenders maintained their positions save only in one sector where the line was temporarily broken with the loss of a couple of guns. Fighting continued for several days; then, having brought up reinforcements, the Italians delivered another violent attack on August 14, and though the defenders were able to maintain their forward positions for some hours and inflicted severe losses on the attackers, they were compelled at last to withdraw.



SOMALILAND AND ADEN

This map, in conjunction with the panoramic drawing at the foot of the page, shows the strategic situation in August, 1940, in Somaliland, where the loss of French support enforced a British withdrawal.

Courtesy of 'The Times'

Meanwhile, the Italian column which had occupied Zeila had made unexpectedly rapid progress along the coast in the direction of Berbera, having reached to within 70 miles of the capital, while still in reserve was the third column, operating from Oadweina. By August 16 the situation of the British forces was authoritatively described as being critical, and it was thought probable that they would have to fall back on Berbera, since they were facing an enemy far more numerous—about two divisions—and one, moreover, far stronger in mechanized armament. It was further stated that, in view of British commitments in the other war zones in Africa and the Middle East, there was a limit to the reinforcements which could be sent to Somaliland. "It is not our object to defend every inch of soil in Somaliland," stated British G.H.Q. in Cairo, "but rather to make the enemy use up his supplies of food, petrol and ammunition which he cannot replenish in what is a strategically wasteful enterprise."

On August 18 a final communiqué stated that: "in Somaliland yesterday the enemy again renewed their determined attacks with picked Italian troops, supported by artillery, tanks and aircraft. But the British force continues to fight with the utmost gallantry, inflicting important losses on the enemy and contesting every yard in its withdrawal towards Berbera." Then on the next day it was announced in London that the whole of the British force, including the wounded and many loyal natives, had been safely evacuated from Berbera on August 17 and 18, and carried away to Aden. All the guns had been safely embarked, and such of the material, stores and equipment which had not been evacuated had been destroyed. "British, Rhodesian, Indian, African and Somaliland troops," stated the War Office, "working in close cooperation with the Royal Navy and the R.A.F., have carried out the role assigned to them with conspicuous skill and bravery, against greatly superior strength. Enemy losses, particularly among Blackshirt units, have been heavy and out of proportion to our own." The statement then went on to review the situation that had presented itself to the British Command. The original plans for the defence of the colony had had to be abandoned, as they had been based on a scheme of close cooperation between the British and the authorities in French Somaliland. When France quitted the war a new and grave situation was created. Three alternatives were open: to send reinforcements

Withdrawal from Berbera

STRATEGIC WITHDRAWAL FROM BRITISH SOMALILAND

The panoramic view below shows the difficult nature of the terrain and explains why the relatively weak British forces had to give ground to three strong Italian columns which invaded Somaliland from Abyssinia on August 4, 1940. One column occupied Hargeisa (August 5) and another Oadweina (August 6); the third advanced to Zeila, and thence along the coast towards Berbera. The main British force under Brig.-Gen. A. R. Chater covered the Iugaga Pass and fought delaying actions; heavily engaged on August 11 and 14, it slowly withdrew towards Berbera, whence the entire force was evacuated on August 17–18.

Drawing by Douglas Macpherson, courtesy of 'The Sphere'



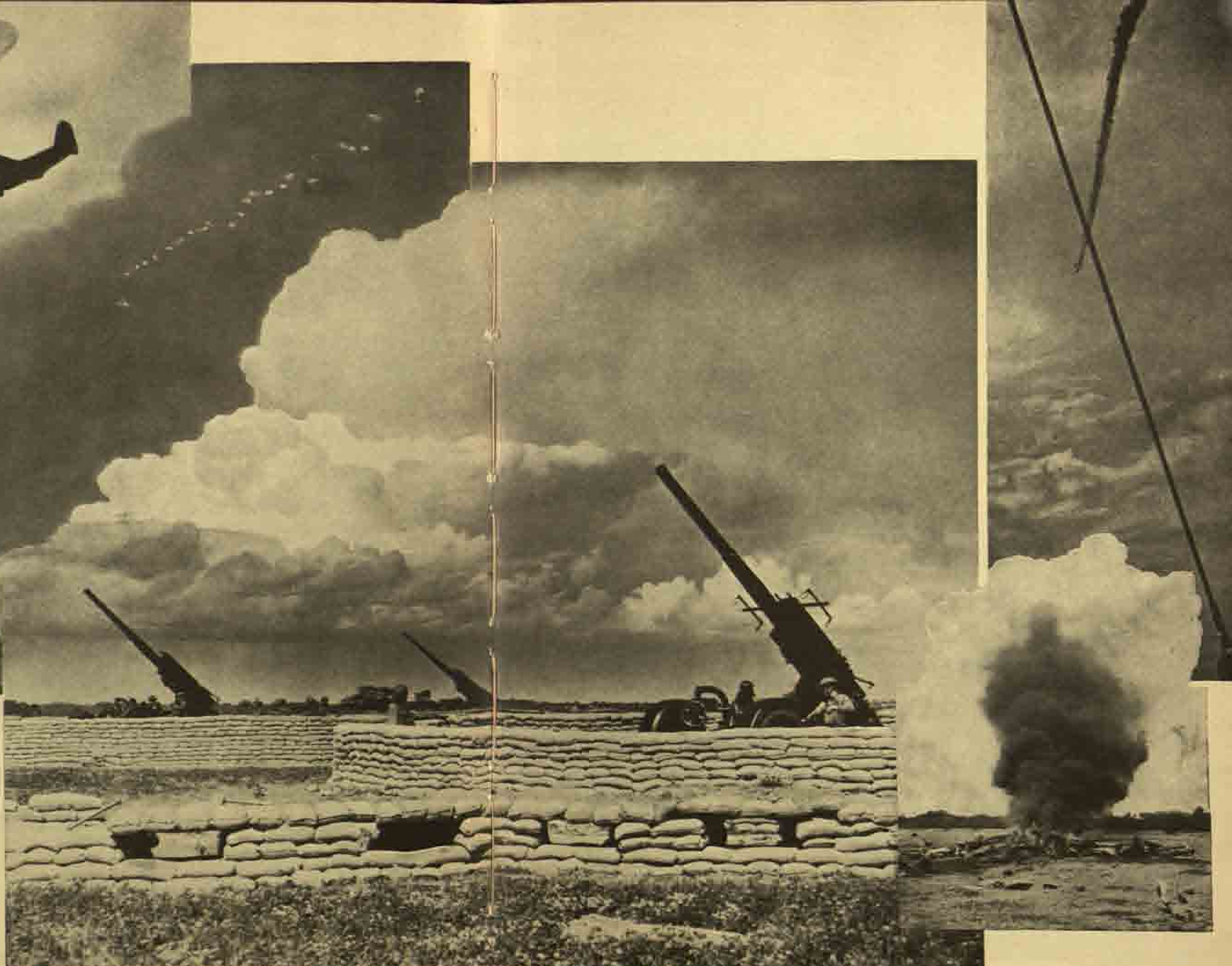


BRITAIN HAS FIRST TASTE OF SERIOUS BOMBING

Here is the scene in a street of Cambridge after the Luftwaffe had raided Eastern England (night of June 18-19, 1940). As in most of the raids at this time, there seemed to be either a deliberate attack on dwelling-houses or a complete failure to discriminate between military and non-military objectives. Eleven people lost their lives and fourteen were wounded in this raid.

Photo, Keystone





END OF A DAYLIGHT RAIDER

As July passed into August the great German air offensive against Britain was rapidly intensified. Every day from dawn to dusk enemy aircraft, singly or in large formations, made most determined attempts to terrorize the population, obliterate air fields and drive the R.A.F. defenders from the skies. Six miles up in the glorious summer heavens deadly battles raged as Spitfires and Hurricanes again and again beat off the attackers, while, far below, the ground defences were in almost continuous action. Here, in typical photo-story, is shown the dramatic end of one of the A.A. gunners' many victims—a Dornier 215. As the fury of the Battle of Britain increased so did the Nazi losses—on August 8, 60 enemy planes were lost, on August 11, 66; on August 13, 78; and on August 15, 180.

Photos, Keystone, Planet News, Central Press, G.P.U., "Daily Mirror"



WHAT OUR BOMBER SQUADRONS DID TO HAMM

At the huge marshalling yards of Hamm, a junction of the railways from Münster and Hamburg to Dortmund, loaded wagons are collected and marshalled for dispatch to all parts of Germany, and there is an enormous traffic in munitions. Night after night, for months on end, the R.A.F. attacked Hamm; the top photograph shows a stick of bombs falling on the railway junction, while that below was taken after a successful raid, and shows hundreds of burnt-out wagons.

Photos, British Official: Crown copyright; "March of Time"



on a large scale, immediate and unresisting evacuation and—the one chosen—to remain with our small force, using it to inflict the maximum losses on the enemy, until withdrawal became inevitable.

Strategically, the results accruing to the Italians from their conquest of British Somaliland were as inconsiderable as in prestige they were great. But prestige can be bought at too high a price, and there were few to cavil at the decision to withdraw the hard-pressed garrison when an Italian thrust was believed to be imminent in the far more important war zone of Egypt.

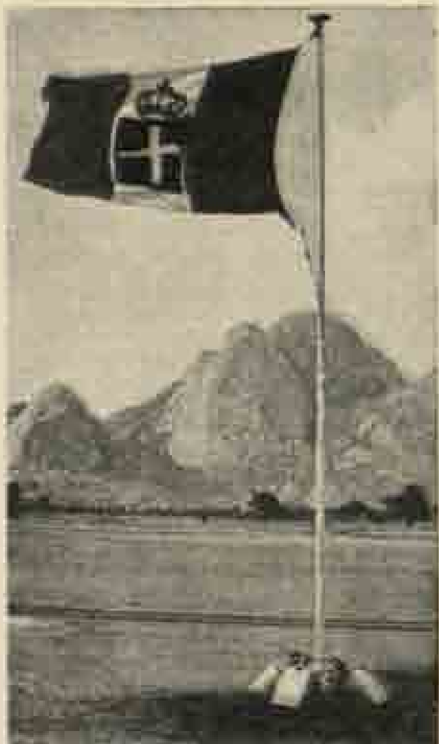


AFTER THE ITALIANS TOOK BERBERA

Berbera, capital of British Somaliland, fell into Italian hands in the middle of August, 1940, when British forces were withdrawn from the Colony. This photograph shows Government House, damaged by shellfire, with a company of Italian Askaris in the foreground.

Photo, E.N.A.

Early in August a statement issued from British G.H.Q. in Cairo declared that it might now be said that the first phase of the operation in the Libyan Desert was finishing. During this phase a small British mobile force, consisting of a few guns and a few companies of infantry, had completely dominated the eastern frontier area of Libya in the face of Italian forces greatly superior in numbers. It was now known that the enemy had assembled a large force in the Bardia area, and in spite of the constant drain on the men and material he had hung on to the frontier fort of Capuzzo to cover this concentration. An attack on Egypt, then, could be expected, but should it materialize it would not take the British forces by surprise, and General Wavell had prepared his plans to meet it.



A SET-BACK IN THE SUDAN

The extreme weakness of British forces in the Sudan made it impossible to hold the frontier against the Italians, who occupied Gallabat (see page 1136) on July 3, 1940, and Kassala the same day. These photographs, taken after Italian occupation, show a breastwork at Kassala near the River Gash and (centre, left) the Italian flag planted on Kassala airport.

Photos, E.N.A.



Historic Documents. CLXIX–CLXXIV

SOME PROBLEMS OF NEUTRALITY IN EUROPE

As Germany and her Russian ally successfully occupied one European country after another, the anxiety of the few which had not suffered invasion became acute. But despite Mr. Churchill's warning they continued to declare their neutrality, and Russia, with a certain irony, also announced in the late summer of 1940 that she intended to keep out of the war.

MR. CHURCHILL, FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY, IN A BROADCAST, JANUARY 20, 1940:

WHAT would happen if all these neutral nations . . . were with one spontaneous impulse to do their duty in accordance with the Covenant of the League and stand together with the British and French Empires against aggression and wrong? At present their plight is lamentable, and will become much worse. They bow humbly and in fear to German threats of violence, comforting themselves with the thought that Britain and France will win, that they will strictly observe all the laws and conventions, and that breaches are only to be expected from the German side. Each one hopes that if he feeds the crocodile enough the crocodile will eat him last. All of them hope that the storm will pass before their turn comes to be devoured. But the storm will not pass. It will rage and roar ever more loudly, ever more widely. It will spread to the South. It will spread to the North. There is no chance of a speedy end except through united action, and if at any time Britain and France, wearying of the struggle, were to make a shameful peace, nothing would remain for the smaller States of Europe, with their shipping and their possessions, but to be divided between the opposite, though similar, barbarisms of Nazidom and Bolshevism. . . .

KING GUSTAV OF SWEDEN, IN A SPEECH TO THE SWEDISH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL, FEBRUARY 10, 1940:

IT is my wish to make quite clear to my people how difficult and responsible is the situation in which we now find ourselves. I feel it is my duty to try as long as possible to keep my country out of the conflict which is going on in the world, and therefore, with the approval of the Government and Parliament, I issued a declaration of neutrality.

I have always followed Finland's heroic struggle against superior forces with the deepest admiration. From the beginning Sweden has given voluntary assistance and tried in many other ways to help this country, but from the first hour I informed Finland that she unfortunately could not count on military intervention from Sweden. With sorrow in my heart, and after the fullest deliberation, I have come to the conclusion that in the present situation we must maintain this, our standpoint. I am of the firm opinion that if Sweden were to intervene in Finland we should run the greatest risk not only of being involved in war with Russia, but also in the war between the Great Powers, and I have not been able to take upon myself so great a responsibility. In such a situation it would also probably be impossible to give Finland the not inconsiderable assistance which she is now getting from us, which she so sorely needs and which we are ready, in future, also to render with all our hearts.

Sweden's vital interests—her honour and her peace—are the ideals which I always have in view. On the course which we have already adopted I hope, with God's help, to escape the calamities of war.

HERR HANSSON, SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER, IN A BROADCAST, APRIL 12, 1940:

ONCE again our country experiences an hour of trial, which may be the most trying we have had for more than a century. War has been brought to our frontiers. Everybody will understand that, although peace prevails in our own country, our minds are deeply shaken.

Sweden is determined to observe her principle of strict neutrality. This means that she reserves the rights of independent judgement. It is not in accordance with strict neutrality to allow any scope for foreign enterprises. No demands in that direction have been put to us, but if such demands are put forward they will have to be refused. To guard our neutrality means that the country will be defended in case of necessity. To be sure that Sweden can do this, the Government has, during the entire war, maintained a comprehensive readiness for defence, which has been adapted in accordance with our judgement of existing needs.

I have the firm conviction that, through unity and determination, we shall be able to steer our country through difficulties. Should the miseries of war, nevertheless, cross our frontiers, the Swedish people will surely prove themselves able to safeguard what is most precious to all of us—the freedom and independence of Sweden.

LORD HALIFAX, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, IN A STATEMENT TO THE LONDON CORRESPONDENT OF "A.B.C." IN MADRID, MAY 22, 1940:

THE policy of his Majesty's Government towards Spain is to maintain and develop the friendly relations at present existing between the two countries. It is important to realize that this policy is not that of one party only in the State, but one which is common to all parties. . . . It is, further, a policy which is in keeping with the traditional relations between our two countries, and does not depend upon the form of government adopted by the Spanish people. His Majesty's Government feel that friendly relations between this country and Spain answer to the fundamental needs and inclinations of both countries, based as they are upon over 150 years of peace between them and a common regard for the fundamental Christian principles of European civilization.

In these circumstances his Majesty's Government sincerely welcomed the Spanish Government's declaration of neutrality made at the outbreak of war, and also the more recent statements by Spanish leaders and in the Spanish Press emphasizing Spain's desire to maintain neutrality. This desire is fully appreciated by his Majesty's Government, who, for their part, have the firmest intention to respect Spanish neutrality so long as it is respected by others.

MR. DE VALERA, PRIME MINISTER OF EIRE, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE "NEW YORK TIMES," JULY 5, 1940:

WE are in the unenviable position of being a country which is eyed by two great Powers. We do not wish to become a cockpit in this war. We do not wish to become the base for attack by any Power upon any other Power. We have not the slightest intention of abandoning our neutrality. We intend to resist any attack thereon from any quarter whatever. But if war—which we do not want and for which we are in no way to blame—comes upon us, we will do our best to defend ourselves. And whoever comes first will be our immediate enemy.

We have tried to get a united Ireland. The present situation is anomalous and dangerous. Only in the union of all Ireland will the aspirations of the people be satisfied. As it is now, one part of Ireland is neutral and the other belligerent. That is abnormal from the point of view of defence, as many of us foresaw. To face this emergency Ireland should be whole and undivided. The determination of policy and defence measures are possible only on such a basis. And such measures must be founded on neutrality. . . .

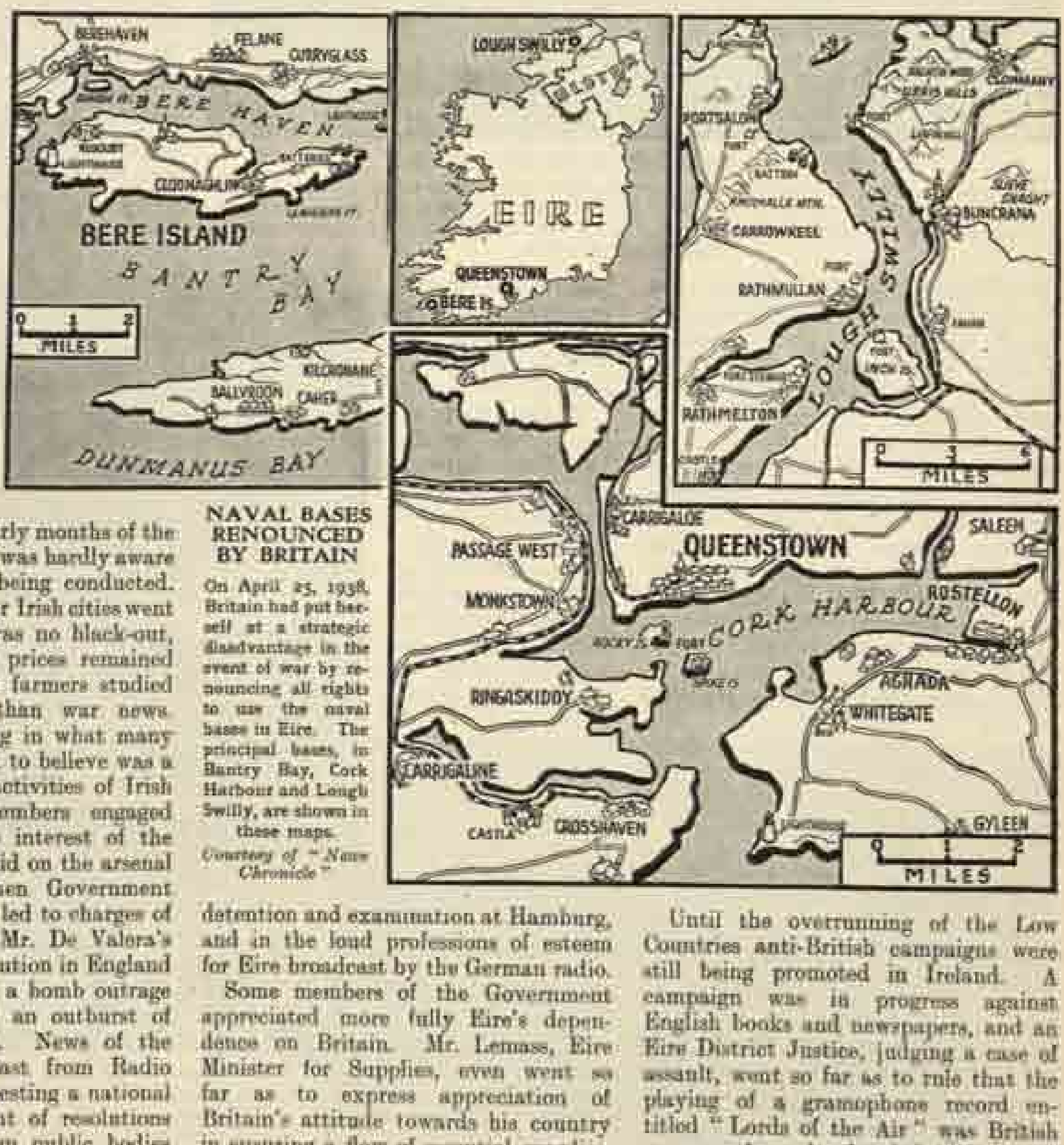
M. MOLOTOV, SOVIET PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, IN A STATEMENT TO THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE SOVIET UNION, AUGUST 1, 1940:

THE first year of the war is drawing to a close, but the end of the war is not yet in sight. It is more probable that we are now on the eve of a new stage in the intensification of the war between Germany and Italy on the one side and England, assisted by the United States, on the other. All these events have not caused a change in the foreign policy of the Union. True to her policy of peace and neutrality, the Soviet Union is not taking part in the war. . . .

NEUTRAL EUROPE: WARTIME REACTIONS DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 1940

Tinged at First with Anti-British Sentiment, Eire's Neutrality Later Became More Realistic—In Face of Nazi Successes, all Parties United for Defence Measures—Sweden, Hemmed in by Dictator Countries, Practised Circumspect Impartiality—Position in Switzerland—Policy of Spain—Señor Suñer's Missions—Grasping at Tangier—Portugal and her Overseas Empire

The swift success of the mechanized German forces, which in May and June, 1940, swept like a scythe to the rear of the British armies in Flanders and extinguished in a few weeks the liberty of Norway, Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg, and France, could not but cause the deepest anxiety to Europe's remaining smaller neutrals. Of these the country of most immediate concern to Britain was Eire, whose territory after a Nazi occupation of the French Channel and Atlantic coasts might reasonably be envisaged as a suitable jumping-off point for an intensified blockade or invasion of the United Kingdom.



NAVAL BASES RENOUNCED BY BRITAIN

On April 25, 1938, Britain had put herself at a strategic disadvantage in the event of war by renouncing all rights to use the naval bases in Eire. The principal bases, in Bantry Bay, Cork Harbour and Lough Swilly, are shown in these maps.

Courtesy of "News Chronicle"

Of Eire it could be said that during the early months of the Second World War she was hardly aware that hostilities were being conducted. Life in Dublin and other Irish cities went on as usual. There was no black-out, no shortage of food; prices remained reasonably stable, and farmers studied stock prices rather than war news. The country was living in what many observers were inclined to believe was a fools' paradise. The activities of Irish Republican Army members engaged to a large extent the interest of the reading public. The raid on the arsenal in Phoenix Park, when Government munitions were stolen, led to charges of incompetence against Mr. De Valera's Government. The execution in England of two I.R.A. men for a bomb outrage at Coventry provoked an outburst of anti-British sentiment. News of the execution was broadcast from Radio Eireann in a form suggesting a national calamity, and a torrent of resolutions was set in motion from public bodies all over the country.

That Germany and not Britain was Ireland's enemy was shown when in February, 1940, a neutral ship bound for Ireland with a cargo destined exclusively for that country was torpedoed by a German submarine. The Irish disregarded this object lesson and sought comfort in the fact that timber from Finland was still arriving, after detention and examination at Hamburg, and in the loud professions of esteem for Eire broadcast by the German radio.

Some members of the Government appreciated more fully Eire's dependence on Britain. Mr. Lemass, Eire Minister for Supplies, even went so far as to express appreciation of Britain's attitude towards his country in ensuring a flow of essential supplies. But at the same time the tendency to ignore the possible consequences on Eire economy of an Allied defeat increased, and De Valera, questioned in March about the financial and economic effects of the war upon Eire, gave optimistic answers. His optimism was belied by trade statistics, which showed an adverse trade balance for February of nearly £2,000,000.

Until the overrunning of the Low Countries anti-British campaigns were still being promoted in Ireland. A campaign was in progress against English books and newspapers, and an Eire District Justice, judging a case of assault, went so far as to rule that the playing of a gramophone record entitled "Lords of the Air" was British propaganda, and ordered that the record be publicly burned.

The effect of Germany's forward march was electric. Mr. De Valera, who, it was reported, had been thinking



EIRE EXPANDS HER DEFENCE FORCES

The course of events in France in June, 1940, impelled Eire to look to her defence against possible aggression, and in a great recruiting drive Mr. Cosgrave, leader of the largest opposition party, spoke on the same platform as Mr. De Valera (seen on extreme right of photograph).

Photo, Associated Press

of holding a general election with "neutrality" as the main Government plank, dropped the idea. Political enmities were forgotten. Mr. William Cosgrave, Opposition Leader of the Dail, announced his preparedness for reconciliation with De Valera. The latter responded to the impulse for national cooperation in emergency by forming an all-party National Defence Council (of three Cabinet Ministers, three Fine Gael representatives and two Labour Party men) with the task of formulating a national security policy and advising the Government thereon. Simultaneously the Government called up the 7,000 regular troops and 20,000 reservists of the Eire Army, placing the Army on a war footing.

Tactics used by the Nazis in the Low Countries were reflected in the announcement that a Local Security Corps had been formed to deal with parachute invaders, while a large department store in Dublin even placed anti-aircraft guns on its roof. Hand in hand with a national recruiting campaign went warnings against Eire's potential Fifth Columnists, the I.R.A., who, it was alleged in many quarters, were being financed from Nazi funds.

"The liberties for which we are all trustees have been dearly bought. In this land there must not be found one treacherous hand to give them away," exclaimed Mr. De Valera. In belated awareness of impending danger, the police sprang into activity throughout Eire, arresting I.R.A. men suspected of treasonable activity and searching for buried stores of arms. But none of these measures implied in the least an abandonment of Eire's neutrality. Indeed, if anything, the neutrality policy of De Valera became more emphatic than ever.

The absurdity of Eire's position was manifest to everyone except the Irish. Between Eire and the Nazi hordes lay only 600 miles of water and the British Fleet. The three-ship Navy of Eire could obviously do little on its own





SEA AND AIR FORCES OF EIRE

For patrolling her coastal waters Eire employed fast motor torpedo-boats such as this, seen flying the Irish tricolour. These vessels were considered adequate protection against possible infringement of the neutral zone. A small but efficient air force was maintained; gunners are here overhauling their machine-guns in the filing-room at an airfield. The country's anti-aircraft defences were organized on a similarly restricted but businesslike basis.

Photos, Planet News; Sport & General

account. Eire's Air Force was small and poorly equipped. Her lack of anti-aircraft guns and fighter aircraft was to be later pleaded by Isolationist enthusiasts as a reason for not antagonizing Germany.

Eire's small army, in spite of the bravery of its soldiers, stood scant chance of saving the country from the fate that had befallen other small European neutrals, once the protecting shield of British power was removed. But Eire, after the collapse of France, had become of prime importance to Britain's war effort. The defection of a large part of the French navy had thrown on Britain's Fleet alone the task of defending the sea-routes against U-boat and air depredations. At the same time the enemy's sea-offensive power in these arms had been doubled by the acquisition of French Atlantic bases from which the marauders could operate. Small wonder, then, that with mounting Atlantic shipping losses far-seeing people should deplore the loss of the Eire naval bases voluntarily evacuated by Britain in 1938. British destroyers and aircraft, ranging from these bases, could have done much to minimize the advantages in sea-piracy the Nazis had acquired.

Eire's Naval Bases



HEMMED IN AND OVERAWED, SWEDEN TOOK PRECAUTIONS

Early in 1940 Sweden instituted a stringent black-out, and even the Royal car, which King Gustav is about to enter here, was painted with white bands on wings and bumpers. Many buildings were sandbagged, as below, left, and other air-raid measures were taken.

Photos, Wide World



While Viscount Craigavon, Prime Minister in Northern Ireland, was discussing the problem in London with Mr. Winston Churchill, Eire let it be known that in spite of her absurdly small naval, military and air arms she was determined to fight off invasion from every side. The "Irish back door," as the problem came to be called in England, engaged Press and people in earnest controversy. The former Secretary for War, Mr. Leslie Hore-Belisha, demanded "imagination and inspiring action" in settling the Irish question. "Hitler's triumph," he urged, "can be prevented only by a united policy in Ireland." But Mr. De Valera, if prepared to make concessions at all, would do so only on the basis of a united Ireland, which to him meant the reincorporation of Ulster with Eire, a proposal which Viscount Craigavon branded as "blackmail of the British Government."

The end of July, 1940, saw Eire for the moment alarmed as the threat of Nazi invasion grew. Full-page newspaper advertisements called for 400,000 volunteers to supplement the regular army. Plans were put in hand for



SWEDEN'S AERIAL NEUTRALITY GUARD

The Swedish Air Force was reinforced by fast and powerful interceptor-bomber aircraft such as that on the right, built in the U.S.A. Known as the J.9, this machine carried one 750-lb. bomb for use in a 370 m.p.h. power-dive, in addition to six 100-lb. bombs under the wings. Armed with two machine-guns firing through the airscrews and a third in the rear cockpit, it had the wide range of 1,800 miles. Note the Swedish insignia on fuselage.

Photo, L.N.A.



SWISS FOREIGN MINISTER

On the death of M. Crotta in 1940, M. Pilet-Golaz became Swiss Foreign Minister. He had held office in 1934 as Federal President.

Photo, Wide World

regional commissioners with power to administer their respective areas if the central administration should be disorganized. Ostensibly, in a strange blind "neutrality," these preparations were made as much against Britain as the Nazis. At heart, the Irish still did not believe that war would reach their shores. Eire still remained the only member of the British Commonwealth not at war with Germany, and on the question of the naval bases De Valera remained adamant, in spite of Eire's dependence on oversea shipments for vital defence supplies. To the larger humanitarian issues at stake the Irish were as pathetically indifferent.

Of the remaining neutrals Sweden was in a strange plight. After the Nazi conquest of Norway and Denmark and the Russian march into the Baltic States, she became entirely dependent on what defence resources she could muster and on the goodwill of the two dictators by whose forces she was hemmed in and overawed. Many Swedish citizens saw in this a bitter vindication of their country's hesitant policy towards her sister States when they were the victims of aggression by Germany and Russia. Sweden even agreed to the shipment of food and other supplies to Germans in Northern Norway, and her future dependence on the goodwill of Berlin and Moscow was well emphasized by the Press of both these countries.

Through the good offices of Berlin a Swedish trade commission went to Moscow to petition for some of the commerce of which Sweden was in need since the Nazi occupation of Denmark and Norway had boxed her in the Baltic and shut off the country from other lands. The official Russian Tass Agency issued a belated report on the negotiations, stating that they took place in conformity with Article III of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. "Both Germany and Russia," the statement added, 'regard themselves as interested in the preservation of Sweden's neutrality."

How precarious was Sweden's neutrality was realised when, in May, 1940, German newspapers arriving in Stockholm two weeks old contained an official denial that Germany intended invading the Low Countries — an



GUARDING A RADIO STATION

Though not seriously menaced by the Nazis, Switzerland did not escape the 'war of nerves,' and she took the precaution to guard her principal public buildings. A citizen soldier is here seen at a radio station switchboard.

Photo, Wide World



NEUTRAL STRONGHOLD OF WESTERN EUROPE

Switzerland as the headquarters of the International Red Cross was able to ameliorate the hardships of countless prisoners of war in neighbouring lands. Here is seen the post office of the Red Cross centre at Geneva.

Photo, Wide World





BRITAIN'S SPECIAL ENVOY TO SPAIN

Above, Sir Samuel Hoare leaving the Royal Palace, Madrid, with Baron de las Torres after presenting his credentials as Special Envoy to Franco on June 8, 1940. The Generalissimo is seen below taking the salute as 'Young Spain' marches past during the celebration of the first anniversary of the ending of the civil war, on April 1. Foreign affairs were largely in the hands of Señor Serrano Suñer (left), leader of the pro-Axis trend.

Photos, International Graphic Press; Wide World



invasion which had in the meantime taken place. Small wonder that Sweden, in spite of a German guarantee on which the ink was hardly dry, blacked-out the whole country for the first time, while military intelligence officers anxiously studied reports of German troop movements about Kiel.

Switzerland, whose name might almost be said to stand for neutrality, maintained a cool and courageous impartiality though hedged about by the Axis Powers. The death of M. Motta, her Foreign Minister, was followed by the appointment of M. Pilet-Golaz, a strong representative of the Western European conception of life.





SPANISH BORDER AFTER THE FRENCH COLLAPSE

Despite the exchange of profuse courtesies the appearance of Nazi guards (top) on the Franco-Spanish border raised acute problems for Spain. Not the least was that of controlling the immense stream of refugees pouring across the frontier, as seen above, at the end of June, 1940.

Photos, Keystone; Graphic Photo Union

Thousands of French and other Allied soldiers forced into Switzerland by the German invasion of France were disarmed and fed by the authorities.

Swiss Stand Firm

The Swiss remained intensely attached to the democratic way of life, and the lessons of Nazi Fifth Column, parachutist and other tactics in the invasion of Norway and the Low Countries were not lost on the military command. Bridges were mined, food reserves were accumulated, more men were called to the colours, and the people were instructed in the part they would have to play in the event of foreign invasion. The Press was conspicuously independent, giving the communiqués of both sides and printing comment which hardly concealed Switzerland's democratic sympathies.

No serious threat was made to Swiss integrity by the Nazis. Respect for what might prove to be a tough military problem, coupled with doubtful strategic advantages to an aggressor, may have influenced them in holding their hand, but there was probably a deeper reason. Switzerland was one of the few remaining links between Germany and the oversea world and a centre of international finance, banking and commerce—a kind of neutral oasis in a world sharply divided between Axis and anti-Axis interests. Swiss Red Cross officials were inspecting not only Allied prisoners of war in German camps, but also Nazi prisoners interned in Britain. The clearance of food parcels and letters for prisoners, apart from a considerable contribution to Germany's food supplies, helped to render less likely the chances of Nazi aggression.

But the Swiss motto was "Be prepared," and the Swiss were convinced that ultimately their integrity and the fate of their democracy were bound up with the fate of Britain.

In Spain, during the first seven months of 1940, foreign policy vacillated, with the varying fortunes of war, between strict neutrality in the European conflict and non-belligerency in favour of the Axis Powers. Three main influences were at work. The pro-Axis trend had its most ardent exponent in the white-haired, fanatical Señor Suñer, Minister of the Interior, who was supported by the Falange extremists. But there was also a branch of the Falange including prominent generals like Quiepo de Llano, Aranda and Yague, who were traditionalists in the sense that they were opposed to the "New Order" advocated by Suñer and were not antagonistic to a restoration of the monarchy. The Roman Catholic hierarchy had a foot in both camps. Then there were the inarticulate but numerous Republicans, whose Parties were proscribed after the Civil War. A factor which no Party could leave out of account, however, was that Spain was a war-devastated country, dependent on foreign wheat for the very minimum standard of life. The cost of living was excessive, and Spain was in no position to conduct another war.

General Franco seemed well aware of this factor when he spoke at the military parade in Madrid that marked the first anniversary of the end of the Civil War (April 1, 1940). He referred to the need for raising Spain from her former decadence.

Franco's Aims

A feature of the parade was the surprising extent of mechanization in the new Spanish Army. But Italy's entry into the World War and the collapse of France strengthened the hands of the pro-Axis enthusiasts. June, 1940, was marked by two important events: the establishment of a policy of so-called non-belligerency; and the introduction, contrary to an international convention of 1923, of Spanish "police occupation" in the Tangier Zone. This region, with the extension of hostilities to the Mediterranean, had acquired new strategic significance. In response to British protests a statement was made that

absolute neutrality in the Zone would be maintained. The assertion that a Spanish administration in Tangier must naturally have Spanish officials caused disquiet in Britain, and led to doubts as to the wisdom of the Allies' previous policy of granting special facilities for the import of foodstuffs, especially as the Spanish Press remained consistently anti-British. Nor could Spanish action in Tangier be ignored as a possible precedent to similar claims regarding Gibraltar, over which General Franco was reported (without confirmation) to have demanded a mandate in an address to Army officers in July, 1940.

Germany's occupation of part of France gave her a common frontier with Spain, and the selection of the territory thus brought under direct Nazi rule seemed to have been made deliberately with this purpose. Two further possibilities gave Britain cause for concern. One was the extent to which Gestapo officials would further penetrate Spain, with a view perhaps to eventual military action against Gibraltar (some observers gave the number of German "tourists" in Spain as 100,000); the other was the question whether Spain could be used by the Nazis to mitigate the effect of Britain's blockade of Germany. Mr. Dalton, Minister of Economic Warfare, stated in the House of Commons that steps were being taken to ensure that while Spain should get enough oil for her internal requirements, this would not allow her to re-export.

Nazis on Spanish Frontier

In general, the entry of Italy into the war simplified the problem of blockade for the Allies, for she was now debarred from receiving re-exports of rubber, ores and oil from Spain. The loss of French naval control in the Mediterranean was more than offset by the control which could be exercised by Britain on oversea ports of shipment through the navicert system.

General Franco fulfilled the wishes of an overwhelming number of Spaniards in keeping Spain out of the war, and pro-Axis enthusiasms at Hitler's continental victories were not allowed to get out of hand. An indication of this was the signing at the end of July of a treaty with Portugal, whereby both countries undertook to confer on the best means of safeguarding their joint interests whenever the safety of either or both of their territories or independence was compromised. Britain welcomed this pact.



PREMIER AND VIRTUAL DICTATOR OF PORTUGAL

Dr. Antonio d'Oliveira Salazar, Premier of Portugal, is here seen passing over his ballot paper to be placed in the urn at a municipal election. Since Salazar took office in 1932 he had balanced the national budget and restored order to the finances of his country. His 'dictatorship' was a benevolent one.

Photo, Wide World

The position of Portugal in some respects resembled that of Switzerland, for the German conquest of much of Europe—coupled with Nazi infiltration and influence in Spain—had cut her off from the rest of the Continent. But there were important differences both geographical and political.

Portugal was an Atlantic State, whose hardy seafarers had in past days sailed all the oceans and done much colonization; the Portuguese empire was some 800,000 square miles in extent and had been welded together into a coherent whole. To Lisbon came ships from the Americas and the East, and also trans-ocean aircraft which linked the U.S.A. with free Europe. Politically Portugal was bound to Britain by an alliance four centuries old, and the current treaty provided for help in case of attack. In the present war Portugal was neutral and had no obligation to intervene, though she was acutely conscious of her peril in the event of a Nazi switch towards Gibraltar, or of a German move that might affect Madeira and the Azores, to say nothing of her other oversea territories.

Much traffic and commerce flowed to Lisbon, where diplomats and agents of belligerent and neutral nations came and went freely. Her streets were not blacked out, and (save for certain restrictions) life went on in some semblance of peacetime conditions.

In spite of Nazi pressure and intense propaganda, Dr. Salazar, Portugal's peasant-Premier, held fast to his conviction that the integrity of the country and its empire depended on Britain's rule of the seas.

His task was a difficult one, for there was an influential class whose sympathies were with Germany, while the military and strategical weakness of Portugal dictated caution. The most friendly relations were maintained with Britain, who had no reason to doubt Portugal's fidelity to her engagements. This confidence was amply justified in a statement made later by Dr. Salazar.



SPANISH HANDS GRASP AT TANGIER

Taking advantage of the French set-back and Britain's preoccupation with the war, Spain, on June 14, 1940, sent a force of marines into the Tangier International Zone, a move which seemed to portend more vigorous measures later.

Photo, International Graphic Press

Diary of the War

JULY, 1940

July 1, 1940. Rumania renounces Anglo-French guarantee of her integrity. R.A.F. fire oil refinery at Augusta, Sicily. Successful raids in Kenya area. Graziani made C.-in-C. of Italian Forces in North Africa. British steamers "Empire Toucan," "Guido" and "Zarian" reported torpedoed. Bombs fall on N.E. coasts of England and Scotland. Two raiders destroyed. Enemy landings in Channel Islands announced.

July 2. Four Italian submarines reported sunk in Mediterranean. R.A.F. bomb battleship "Scharnhorst" in Kiel docks, aerodromes in Germany and ammunition barges at Rotterdam. Raids on N.E. coast towns and places in S.W. England and Wales. British liner "Arandora Star," carrying enemy internees to Canada,sunk by U-boat.

July 3. Royal Navy seize all French warships in British harbours. Those in North African ports which refused conditions offered are fired upon, one sunk and many damaged. R.A.F. bomb objectives in Belgium and Holland. Daylight raids over England and Scotland. Seven Nazi bombers shot down.

July 4. R.A.F. make heavy day and night raids on targets in N.W. Germany, Holland and Belgium. Nine enemy fighters shot down near Sidi Barrani, Western Desert. British garrisons at Kassala and Gallabat, Sudan frontier, withdraw. Bombs fall on Portland.

July 5. R.A.F. sink large German supply ship off Dutch coast and damage another. Night raids on enemy naval bases, docks, railway junctions and aerodromes. Troops and transport near Bardia, Libya, bombed. Pétain Govt. severs diplomatic relations with Britain.

July 6. Fleet Air Arm attack battleship "Dunkerque" grounded at Oran. Demobilization of French Fleet at Alexandria proceeds. R.A.F. bomb seaplane bases at Norderney and Hornum, and shipbuilding yards and aerodromes. Italian warships in Tobruk harbour attacked from air. Aerodrome at Catania, Sicily, raided. Two bombers shot down off British coasts.

July 7. Submarine "Snapper" reported to have torpedoed five German supply ships. R.A.F. bomb targets 300 miles inside Germany. Bergen oil tanks fired by Fleet Air Arm. Night bombers attack Ludwigshaven and Frankfurt, naval barracks at Wilhelmshaven, canal basin at Duisburg-Ruhrort and several Dutch aerodromes. Three enemy fighters destroyed off S.E. coast.

July 8. Destroyer "Whirlwind" reported sunk by U-boat. French battleship "Richelieu" at Dakar, having refused British terms, is put out of action. R.A.F. raid Ostend. Invasion barges concentrated on canals heavily bombed. Night bombers attack Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, oil refineries at Homburg and many aerodromes. Three raids by enemy on Malta. Eight Nazi aircraft shot down over Britain.

July 9. Mediterranean Fleet contacts Italian forces east of Malta and damages battleship. H.M. submarine "Parthian" sinks Italian U-boat. Other naval forces carry out sweep towards Central Mediterranean and destroy 20 attacking aircraft. Night raids on Wilhelmshaven, Bremen, Mannheim and many aerodromes. Eight Nazi aircraft shot down over Britain.

July 10. Fleet Air Arm sink Italian destroyer in Sicilian harbour. Large-scale air fighting off S. and E. coasts; 14 enemy aircraft shot down, 23 severely damaged.

July 11. Dawn raid on Boulogne aerodrome. R.A.F. attack targets in France and Low Countries, including invasion barges. Night raids on Cologne, Ludwigshaven, Siegburg and Bremen. Enemy 'planes attack shipping and other coastal objectives; 23 shot down.

July 12. Night raids on Emden and Kiel. Enemy machines reported over S.W. England, Wales and Scotland. Eleven bombers destroyed.

July 13. R.A.F. make night raids on docks at Hamburg, Wilhelmshaven, Bremen and Emden, factories, oil refineries, goods yards and 14 enemy aerodromes. R.A.F. attack El Aden, El Gubbi, Bardia and Tobruk. Twelve raiders shot down over Britain.

July 14. H.M. destroyer "Escort" reported lost. R.A.F. attack Bremen, Hamburg, Hamm, Soest, oil storage depot at Ghent and many aerodromes. Shipping in Tobruk harbour attacked and many Italian posts in Libya and Eritrea. Garrison in British Moyale withdraw. British convoy attacked in Straits by enemy aircraft; seven shot down.

July 15. Submarine "Shark" reported lost. R.A.F. attack aerodromes in France and Low Countries, oil refineries at Hanover and targets at Paderborn, Hamm and Osnabruck.

July 16. Bombing raids reported on Tobruk, Bardia and El Gazala. R.A.F. attack aerodromes and barge concentrations in Northern France. Three bombers shot down off Britain.

July 17. U-boat sunk in Atlantic by Australian flying-boat. Reported that R.A.F. have put out of action double aqueduct of Dortmund-Ems canal. Further attacks on barge concentrations in Holland and Belgium, aerodromes at Merville and Hertogenbosch, oil depots at Ghent and in the Ruhr.

July 18. R.A.F. make daylight raids on barges near Rotterdam, Boulogne harbour and other targets. Night attacks on Emden, Harlingen, Wilemsoord, Ghent, Bremen and Essen. Italian bases in E. and N. Africa raided. Two Nazi 'planes destroyed.

July 19. Italian cruiser "Bartolomeo Colleoni" sunk off Crete. R.A.F. raid aerodromes and seaplane bases in N. Germany and Holland. Twelve enemy aircraft destroyed round Britain. Sir Alan Brooke becomes C.-in-C. Home Forces.

July 20. Night raids on Wilhelmshaven and other centres. Fleet Air Arm attack Tobruk harbour. Twenty-one German raiders destroyed.

July 21. Submarine "Salmon" reported lost. R.A.F. attack targets at Rotterdam, Bremen, Wismar, Rotenburg, Kassel, Göttingen, Hamm, Soest and Ghent. Four raiders shot down.

July 22. H.M. destroyer "Brazen" reported lost. Heavy night attacks on targets in Germany, Holland, France and Norway. Night bombers attack widespread places in England and Scotland. Three shot down.

July 23. R.A.F. bomb aircraft factories, oil depots and aerodromes in Holland and Germany. Dornier and flying-boat shot down off Scotland.

July 24. German warship torpedoed in North Sea by Fleet Air Arm aircraft. British motor torpedo-boat engages six M.T.B.s, hitting one. Night R.A.F. raids on Emden, Wilhelmshaven, Hamburg, Wismar, Borkum and Texel. Twelve raiders shot down over Britain.

July 25. French ship "Meknès," repatriating 1,300 French naval officers and men, sunk off Portland by enemy M.T.B. Night raids on many targets in N.W. Germany and Holland. R.A.F. attack Assab and Massawa. Five vessels in Channel convoy sunk by air attack. Other widespread attacks on British shipping; 28 enemy aircraft destroyed.

July 26. British liner "Accra" sunk; attacking U-boats both destroyed. H.M. trawler "Fleming" lost in action between two trawlers and four dive-bombers. Daylight raids on Dortmund power station and aerodromes at Schiphol and Waalhaven. Four raiders shot down round Britain.

July 27. Enemy supply ships bombed off Norwegian and Dutch coasts. R.A.F. bomb Nordsee Canal, barges at Stavoren, Friesland, oil depots at Hamburg and Amsterdam, docks at Wilhelmshaven and Bremen and eight enemy aerodromes. Five raiders destroyed over Britain.

July 28. R.A.F. shoot down four raiders over Malta. Night attacks on oil tanks at Cherbourg and on 17 aerodromes. Nine Italian 'planes shot down over Africa and Mediterranean. Eleven raiders destroyed over Britain.

July 29. H.M.S. "Guillemot" destroys German dive-bomber. R.A.F. attack barges at Emden and Hamburg, oil refineries, shipping and communications in N.W. Germany, the Ruhr and Low Countries. Big air attack on Dover. Twenty-one German 'planes destroyed.

July 30. Award of Army's first two V.C.s. R.A.F. bomb aerodromes, barges, oil storage plants and naval base at Emden. Three raiders destroyed.

July 31. H.M.S. "Alcantara" damages disguised German raider off Brazil. Destroyer "Delight" reported sunk. Raids on German aerodromes and shipping.

Chapter 110

BATTLE OF BRITAIN, PHASE I: NAZI ONSLAUGHT ON SHIPPING, PORTS AND AERODROMES

Air Attack on England Begins—Assault on Convoys—Mass Raids on Dover, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight—Enormous Enemy Losses: Attack Diverted to our Airfields—Change of Tactics Fails to Diminish Nazi Casualties—Types of Enemy Aircraft Engaged—Hurricanes, Spitfires and Defiants—The Luftwaffe was Shattered—Triumph of Organization and Control—How Civilian Morale Stood the Test

"THE gratitude of every home in our island, in our Empire and indeed throughout the world, except in the abodes of the guilty, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of world war by their prowess and by their devotion. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

It was on the afternoon of August 20, 1940, that the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, spoke these words. Even while he stood in the House of Commons the pilots of the R.A.F. Fighter Command were fighting "undaunted by odds" high above the counties of Essex, Kent, and Surrey, above Sussex, Dorset, and Hampshire, in the brilliant summer sunshine. Berlin had boasted that the attack on England had begun. It had.

The onslaught had opened with attacks on our shipping. It was part of the German plan, which involved first the disruption of our communications by sea and land.

Nazis Attack Convoys

From their bases in France the Luftwaffe roared out over the sea to plunge day after day to the attack on our convoys in the Channel. On August 8 they staged the biggest attack which Britain had so far experienced. Using an immense number of Junkers Ju 87 dive-bombers, the Nazis flew in waves. They came at nine in the morning, at half-past nine, at half-past eleven, and again at half-past four in the afternoon. In the morning the enemy, more than a hundred strong, attacked a convoy off the Isle of Wight, and in the afternoon one hundred and thirty machines of the Luftwaffe appeared over another convoy near Bournemouth. Each time the raiders were met by Hurricanes of the R.A.F. Fighter Command. Each time the enemy lost heavily, were dispersed, and fled. Three days later Ju 87s were in action again off the East Coast, when some 400 were employed against one of our Coastal convoys. Once again our Hurricanes tore out from their stations to grapple with the attackers, and once again the eight Browning machine-guns of our fighters took a terrific toll. The Junkers was no match for the Hurricane, and sixty-six of the enemy went hurtling down. The British losses were 26 machines, but two pilots were saved.



DEFENDER OF LONDON

Heavy responsibility rested upon those who planned the R.A.F. defence against the Luftwaffe's onslaught. Here is Air Vice-Marshal Keith Rodney Park, who organized the fighter squadrons that decisively crushed the violent attack on London and S.E. England. He later received the C.B.

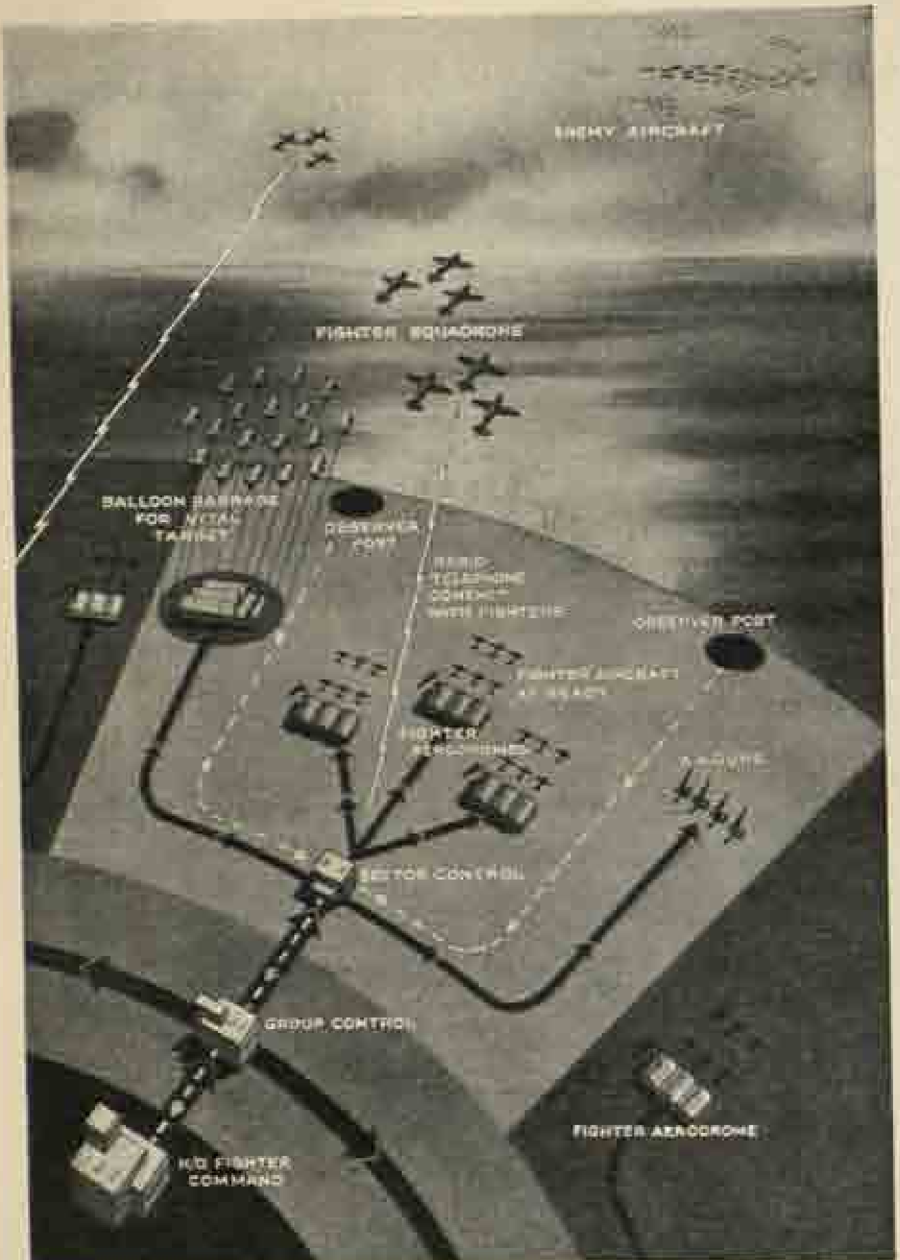
Photo, Barratt's

On August 12 the Germans carried out a mass raid on Dover. Two hundred aircraft in eleven waves came over the town, and on the same day Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight were raided by a force of about 150 aircraft. Each assault was marked by heavy losses inflicted by our fighters and ground defences; in four days the enemy lost 182 aircraft. But the raids continued. On August 13, in mid-morning, the Luftwaffe bombed areas in the Thames Estuary and Portsmouth, using even more machines. In the attack on Portsmouth it was estimated that no fewer than 400 Nazi aircraft were engaged. The German losses rose in proportion, however, and by the evening of August 13 seventy-eight of the enemy had been destroyed, while but thirteen machines of the R.A.F. had fallen. And from these aircraft ten pilots were saved.

At this stage Goering must have realized that even his mighty Luftwaffe could not withstand any longer the terrible hammering it was receiving from the R.A.F., and so he prepared to switch his main attacks from ports and shipping to aerodromes lying inland, in an effort to immobilize our fighter squadrons. On Thursday, August 15, bombers and fighter-bombers penetrated far inland. They came in hundreds seeking out aerodromes, but everywhere they were met by the R.A.F.; 180 smashed and smouldering German aeroplanes lying in many parts of England told the tale of yet another fearful defeat. Yet on the following day, and again on August 18, the foe reappeared—five hundred, six hundred, at great altitudes. Croydon, Kenley, Biggin Hill, Manston, Gosport, Tangmere, Northolt, Rochester and

Chief Attacks and Losses During August, 1940

Date	Losses: German	Losses: British	Remarks
Aug. 8	60	16 (2 pilots safe, 2 wounded)	Dive-bombing on ships near coast.
Aug. 11	66	26 (2 pilots safe)	Weymouth, Portland, ships, barrage balloons.
Aug. 12	62	13 (1 pilot safe)	Portsmouth, Isle of Wight.
Aug. 13	78	13 (10 pilots safe, 3 wounded)	Channel, Thames Estuary, Portsmouth.
Aug. 15	180	22 (14 pilots safe)	Biggest raid; enemy used 1,000 aircraft.
Aug. 18	141	30 (8 pilots safe)	6 mass attacks on S.E.
Aug. 24	50	19 (12 pilots safe)	Aerodromes in Kent attacked.
Aug. 25	55	13 (4 pilots safe)	Aerodromes attacked.
Aug. 26	47	15 (11 pilots safe)	Attacks on Thames Estuary, Sussex, Essex, Portsmouth, Scilly Isles.
Aug. 28	28	14 (7 pilots safe)	High proportion of fighters to bombers.
Aug. 30	62	25 (15 pilots safe)	—
Aug. 31	88	37 (20 pilots safe)	—
TOTALS	917	229 (113 pilots safe, 5 wounded)	



FIGHTER ORGANIZATION TRIUMPH

This schematic diagram illustrates the intricate yet flexible operations control of the Royal Air Force which enabled our fighters to intercept and defeat the Nazi raiders in the Battle of Britain.

From The Air Ministry record 'The Battle of Britain'

In these assaults the tactics were changed: the bomber formations were diminished, while their protective escorts of fighters were enlarged. The fighters flew at great heights—generally some 5,000 feet above the bombers, but sometimes as much as 10,000 feet above them. They flew in a "box" formation, with one group above and ahead, another to a flank or at the rear, and others going to and fro between the bomber sub-formations.

How the R.A.F. countered the enemy attacks is disclosed in the first official account of these fateful weeks, entitled "The Battle of Britain," from which, by permission of H.M. Stationery Office, we quote.

"Generally the enemy attacks were countered by using about half the available squadrons to deal with the enemy fighters

VITAL OBSERVER CORPS

Posts such as that below, dotted throughout the various Sectors, kept Group Headquarters accurately informed of the raiders' movements, enabling Controllers to thwart and intercept to the fullest advantage. The Corps (now the Royal Observer Corps) was manned by middle-aged men from all walks of life: a typical member is inset.

Photos, Sport & General





West Malling were his main objectives. The air was crowded with aircraft, filled with the roar, drone and rising scream of engines; and in the blue sky a maze of white vapour trails showed where Hurricane and Messerschmitt, Dornier and Heinkel were fighting at 400 miles an hour. The Hurricanes maintained the slaughter: in those two days 245 machines of the Luftwaffe were shot down; in ten days the Nazis lost 697 aircraft. For our part, 153 machines were lost, but 60 pilots survived.





Whereas some of the designs are quite crude, as that above, almost all reflect the Nazi love of decorative display.



Animals both realistic and mythical, especially those with wings, apparently appealed strongly to the airman artist.





Eagles in various forms were frequently chosen—as above, top centre left and right, and bottom centre left.







Another common motif was the cat (see above and centre circle) presumably to suggest stealth at night.

Symbolizing the enemy—a map of Britain and Northern Ireland, with Eire carefully indicated as neutral.













NAZI BATTLE BADGES OF THE SKIES

In page 936 is reproduced a selection of emblems from Allied and German aircraft in the early months of the war. It is evident that the Luftwaffe greatly favoured the use of these interesting devices, and here are fourteen further examples—in this case all taken from German fighters and bombers brought down during the Battle of Britain in the autumn of 1940. The running boar on the left is of special interest as it was reputed to be the insignia of Goering's own squadron. In addition to these emblems, certain units had the noses of their aircraft painted in distinctive colours: famous among such were the Yellow-Nosed Fighter Squadrons.





PORTLAND TAKES TOLL OF ITS ATTACKERS

The Battle of Britain opened on August 8, 1940, with fierce bombing of shipping off Bournemouth and the Isle of Wight. Three days later heavy attacks were delivered on Portland and Weymouth, possibly with a view to testing the strength of the coastal defences. Some damage was caused, but the Nazi losses were disproportionately heavy. Top is a Junkers 88 forced down at Portland in this raid, while below is the town during a subsequent attack on August 15.

Photos, Associated Press

and the rest to attack the enemy bombers, which flew normally at from 11-15,000 feet, descending frequently to 7,000 or 8,000 feet in order to drop their bombs. Our fighter tactics at this stage were to deliver attacks from the stern on the Me 109s and Me 110s. This type of attack proved effective because these aircraft were not then armoured. This success of our fighter tactics at this stage can be gauged by a comparison between our losses in pilots and those of the enemy. The ratio was about seven to one and might have been even more striking if so much of the fighting had not taken place over the sea."

The machines the Germans were using at this time were the Me 109 single-seater fighter, the Me 110 two–three-seater fighter-bomber, the Dornier 17 bomber, the Dornier 215 bomber, the Heinkel 111 bomber and the Junkers Ju 88. The Me 109 is an all-metal low-wing monoplane equipped with cannon and machine-guns. Its top speed is about 350 m.p.h. The Me 110 also is a low-wing cantilever monoplane, with its two engines installed in the wings. It has two cannon fitted in the nose and four fixed machine-guns, while another movable gun is installed at the rear of the enclosed cockpit to be used by the gunner. The maximum speed of this machine is some 365 m.p.h., but because of its high wing-loading and big span it has no great power of manoeuvre. It is a formidable machine, however. Because of its heavy wing-loading the Me 109 also is at a disadvantage in manoeuvre, which is one of the reasons why our fighter pilots flying the Hawker Hurricane destroyed so many of the enemy.

The German bombers used at this period for the assault on Britain were all of the twin-engined cantilever monoplane type. The Dornier 17, nicknamed the "flying pencil" because of its long and slender fuselage, flies at 310 m.p.h., and carries two fixed forward-firing machine-guns in the fuselage, one movable gun on the top of the fuselage just behind the wing, and one projecting from the floor. The Dornier 215 is an improved version of the Do 17, with a slightly higher top speed. The Heinkel 111 carries a crew of four and is armed with three machine-guns only. Its speed is 275 m.p.h. The Junkers Ju 88 was introduced in the first place as a dive-bomber, and while it is still used as such it is also employed as an ordinary bombing machine. In armament and general performance it is similar to the Heinkel, with a somewhat higher top speed.

Against these types, which were thrown into the battle in hundreds, the R.A.F. was equipped with the Hawker Hurricane, the Supermarine Spitfire, and, to a lesser extent, the Boulton Paul Defiant.

Hurricane, Spitfire and Defiant

In the form used in September, 1940, the Hurricane had a maximum speed of 335 m.p.h. Its eight Browning machine-guns, which have a rate of fire of 1,200 rounds per minute, are installed in the wings. The Spitfire, at that time similarly armed and powered with the same engine—the Rolls Royce 12-cylinder liquid-cooled Merlin—had a speed of 366 m.p.h. The Boulton Paul Defiant is in another class, since it is a Merlin-engined two-seater fighter

equipped with four Browning machine-guns mounted in a power-operated turret behind the pilot. Flying these aircraft, though greatly outnumbered, the squadrons of the R.A.F. Fighter Command smashed and shattered the Luftwaffe wherever it appeared.

These victories were due to the superb spirit, courage and skill of the pilots and to the magnificent qualities of the aeroplanes they flew. But without the splendidly efficient organization behind them their efforts would have been of little avail. The main principle employed throughout the Battle of Britain was the securing of sufficient strength of fighter aircraft, assembled at the right height at a spot where they could plunge to meet the enemy formation and break it up before it could reach its objective. The squadrons were maintained at their sector aerodromes in various states of preparedness. Some were detailed for duty at a prescribed hour; others were ready to take off within a certain number of minutes; still others—the "Stand-by" squadrons—had their machines with nose into wind, engines warmed up and pilots in the cockpits, ready to take off instantly upon orders from Group Headquarters.

The approach of enemy raiders was signalled and passed to Operations Rooms, in which the development of the attack was recorded by symbols on a large map table. Upon the information received in the Operations Room the Controller based his plans. Throughout the onslaught the greatest care was taken that the fighting was borne equally by the fighter units engaged. No squadron was used which had not had previous experience in air fighting; led by pilots of the finest type, every unit operated with a fine team spirit and with perfect discipline. On many occasions a single squadron of Hurricanes rushed into the attack to break up and disperse in complete confusion huge formations of bombers. Day after



WARM RECEPTION FOR BALLOON BURSTERS

Disconcerted by the strength of our fighter force after a week's hard hammering, on August 15 the enemy amplified his assaults on coastal towns by raids on fighter aerodromes in the S. and S.E. Attempts to shoot down barrage balloons were a feature of this phase, and the lower photograph shows such an attack at Dover, on August 16, 1940, being met by vigorous A.A. fire. Right, a balloon falls in flames.

Photos, Associated Press; Sport & General



day our pilots went into the sky to fight like demons. How immense was their task may be judged by the fact that from August 8 until September 5 no fewer than 4,532 fighter patrols were carried out during daylight—156 a day.

While this great drama was being enacted every day thousands of feet above Britain's coastline, and her towns, villages and fields, the life of the country went on and the morale of the civilian population remained unshaken. The official publication, in commenting upon this, says:

"While this great battle was being fought day after day, the men and women of this country went about their business with very little idea of what was happening high up above their heads in the fields of the air. This battle was not shrouded in the majestic and terrible smoke of a land bombardment, with its roar of guns, its flash of shells, its fountains of erupting earth. There was no sound nor fury—only a pattern of white vapour trails, leisurely changing form and shape, traced by a number of tiny specks scintillating like diamonds in the splendid sunlight. From far away there broke out from time to time a chatter against the duller sound of engines. Yet had that chatter not broken out, that remote sound would have changed first to a roar and then to a fierce shriek, punctuated by the crash of heavy bombs as bomber after bomber unloaded its cargo. In a few days the Southern towns of England, the capital of the Empire itself, would have suffered the fate of Warsaw or Rotterdam."

Throughout this opening phase of the Battle of Britain London grew increasingly familiar with the sirens which sounded the "alert" and the "all-clear" many times almost every day. Enemy machines approached the capital in huge numbers, passing over the Thames Estuary, where they met tremendous fire from the A.A. batteries. The Hurricanes and Spitfires converged to the attack, and the Luftwaffe formations were broken and scattered time after time. For many months the populace had awaited the inevitable onslaught, and everyone was keyed up. There was a tense atmosphere of suspense, yet at the same time an absence of fear. Eyes were turned upward to watch the specks which were machines, and the vapour trails that marked their passing. The raids, the destruction caused by bombs, and the number of German aircraft shot down became the main topic of conversation.

In those weeks of August many people saw for the first time the ugly scars of war. Familiar buildings, known to them for many years, were obliterated in a night: the remains of houses, shops, churches or hospitals, lying as a heap of rubble shrouded by dust, marked the path of the Nazi bomber. Road traffic on the outskirts of London and within the metropolis suffered disorganization because of damage to sewers, gas or water mains and electric cables. For many days barricades stood in streets, carrying arrowed yellow signs bearing the word "Diversion." Lying deep in the ground behind those barriers were delayed action bombs. A testing time had come for the courage and firmness of ordinary men and women, who were now truly "under fire"; a time of trial for the A.R.P. organization and the whole civil defence system.

The London suburbs and a wide dormitory region of the Home Counties all experienced bombing. Country towns, villages and hamlets in South and South-East England were frequently raided and, especially in Kent, wrecked German aircraft sprawling in fields were a common sight. Before the air offensive had opened there had been some popular conjecture as to the effectiveness of the Anderson shelter provided in hundreds of thousands by the Government. The raids during August furnished many instances in which this simple structure had saved lives; and the daily newspapers reported numerous cases of people taking cover in the shelter who had emerged unscathed after a bomb had exploded within a short distance of it. But there still remained a divergence of opinion about

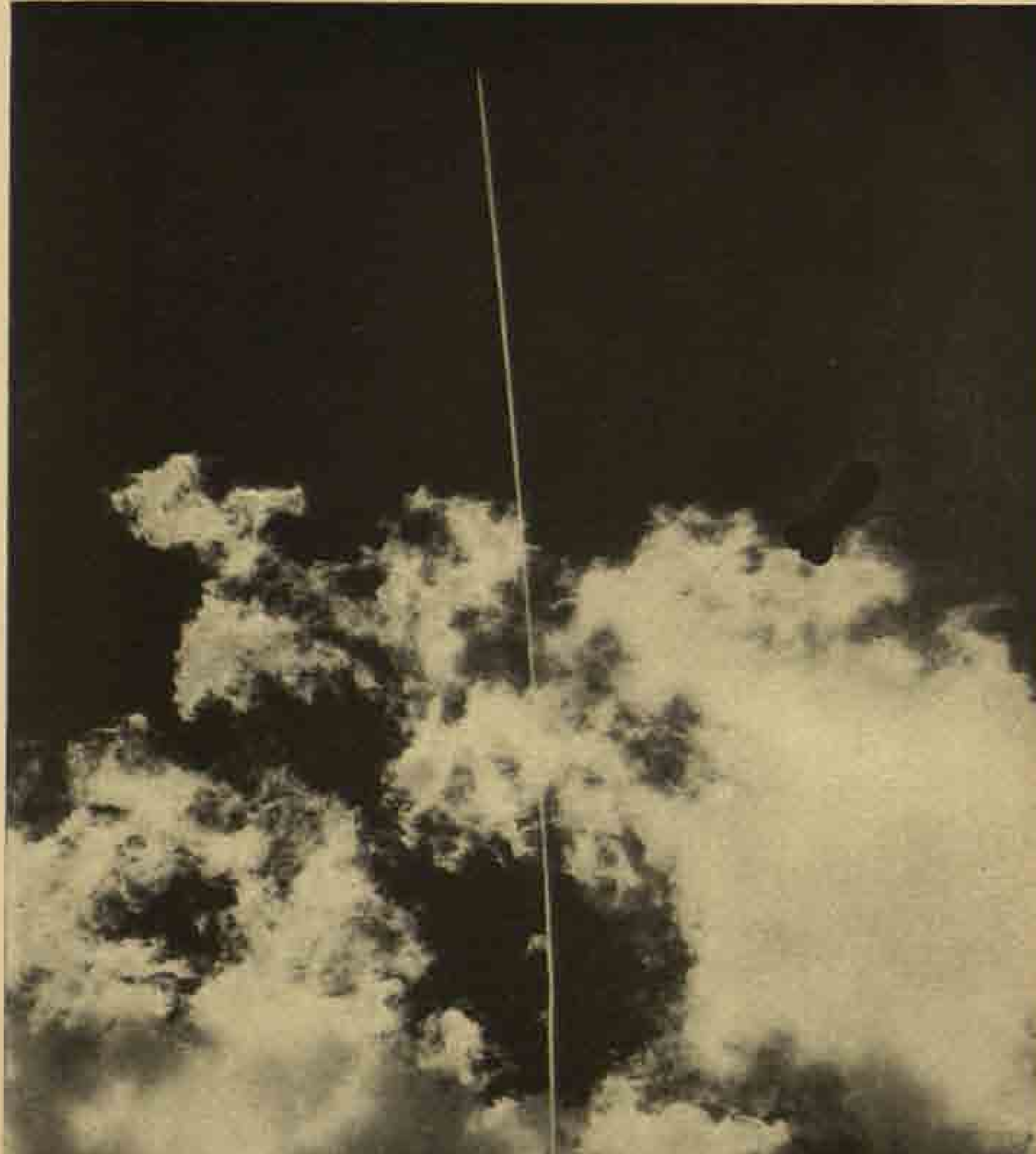




RESCUE BOATS FOR FRIEND AND FOE

Many survivors of air battles came down by parachute into the sea. To succour these the R.A.F. maintained its own fleet of speedy motor-boats, which were in almost continuous action. Here one of them is returning to Dover after a rescue attempt: inset is a closer view of the 63-ft. craft.

Photos, Planet News; Keystone



Photo, Planet News

DANGER SIGN IN THE SUMMER SKY

At the time it was being fought the people of Britain recked little of the vital import of the great campaign in the skies. Perhaps the most memorable evidence they had of the long succession of air-combats was the strange pattern of fleecy smoke trails that interwove with the summer clouds so often in those days. These artificial clouds were produced by the exhaust gases of the contending aircraft condensing in moist layers of air. Above is a typical trail thrown out by a lone enemy reconnaissance 'plane.



POTENT COMRADE OF SPITFIRE AND HURRICANE

Two main types of fighter were used by the Germans in the Battle of Britain—the Me 109 and the Me 110—occasionally supported by the Heinkel 111. To combat these the R.A.F. flew the Spitfire and Hurricane and, at times, the Boulton Paul Defiant. This powerful two-seater fighter (here shown) first made a name for itself during the invasion of the Low Countries in May, 1940, and later over Dunkirk, where 12 Defiants shot down 38 enemy 'planes without loss. Powered by a Rolls Royce Merlin engine of over 1,000 h.p., giving a speed in excess of 300 m.p.h., the Defiant is remarkable for its power-operated turret armed with 4 Browning guns.

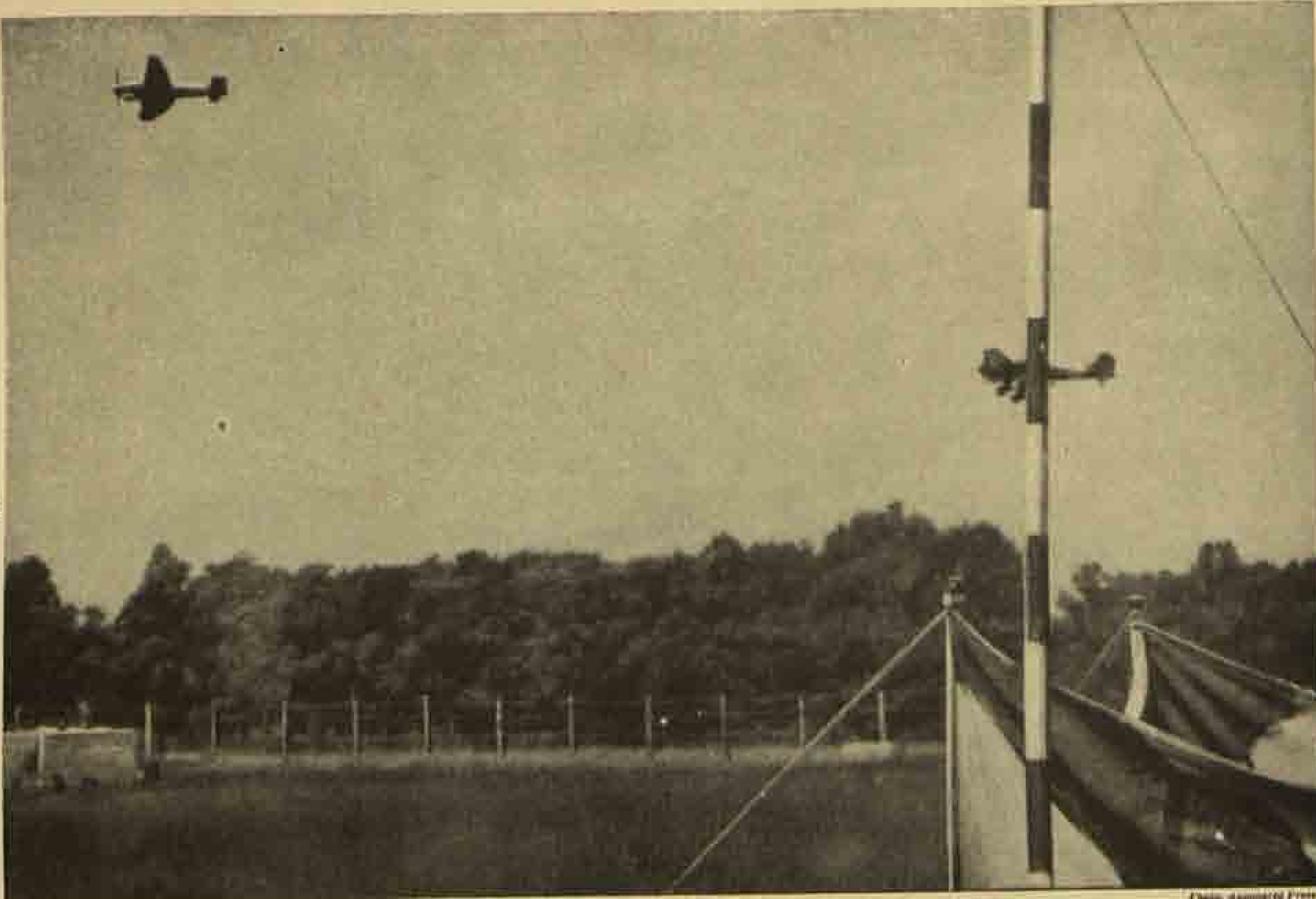
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



CRACK FIGHTER-BOMBER OF THE LUFTWAFFE

Announced in the German press in the spring of 1940 as "a masterpiece of Professor Messerschmitt . . . the latest weapon against England," the Messerschmitt Jaguar found a place among the enemy's striking forces in the Battle of Britain. Towards the close of this great struggle these speedy fighter-bombers replaced the Luftwaffe's long-range bombers in the intensified night assaults on London. Outwardly very similar to the Me 110, save for the glazed bomb-aiming nose, the Jaguar was a low-wing monoplane, powered by two Daimler-Benz liquid-cooled engines, and had a speed in the region of 360 miles per hour.

From the "Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung"



Photo, Associated Press

CLOSE-UP OF 'STUKAS' ATTACKING A.A. GUNS

The week-end August 16–18 saw the climax of the fierce attacks by the Luftwaffe on the coasts and aerodromes of S. and S.E. England (see diagram page 1164) when on the two days, Friday, August 16, and Sunday, August 18, no fewer than 332 German aircraft were known to be destroyed, with a loss of only 59 British machines (29 pilots saved). In this photograph, Junkers 87 dive-bombers are seen machine-gunning an A.A. gun emplacement on the S.E. coast. A photographer 'shot back' with his camera and obtained this remarkable close-up photograph.

using the "Anderson"—especially when "alerts" were prolonged for some hours: many people preferred to "take a chance" within their homes, often sheltering beneath the stairs, a place of comparative safety.

At first the general tendency during day alarms was to take cover; most traffic ceased and the streets emptied. But, as the sounding of the siren became more frequent, familiarity bred a feeling akin to indifference, which grew to such an extent that the authorities took action. Posters were displayed urging people to take cover during raids and warnings were issued in the Press.

The indiscriminate aerial bombing of August was no new experience for the people of Great Britain, for many of the raids of June and July on London and other parts of the country (considered in Chapter 107 and mapped in page 1129) were equally indiscriminate, and it had already been made clear that terrorization from the air was bound to fail. The scale on which such attacks were made on non-military objectives was in August greatly increased, and it was well that elaborate preparations and defensive measures were everywhere ready for instant operation. Those measures might be subject to criticism, as they were, particularly in regard to the provision of deep shelters, but these were matters that were to be remedied as experience directed. On August 23 bombs were dropped on the outer suburbs of London, and the next night, for the first time, they fell on Central London. Thereafter night attacks became widespread (see Chapter 114).

Widespread Night Bombing

The civil defence organization, the A.R.P. workers, men of the A.F.S., the First Aid, Rescue and Demolition parties at the beginning of August numbered 1,500,000 workers, of whom all but 1 in 7 were unpaid volunteers. That organization, built up during a year of waiting for the bombers and subject to much thoughtless criticism, worked exceedingly well when put to the grim tests of the summer and autumn months. Later still they earned the greenest laurels.

The active defences organized under, or in association with, the Fighter Command comprised the R.A.F. fighters, the anti-aircraft guns, the searchlight units and sound locators, the Barrage Balloons (a separate Command) and, as an ancillary, the volunteer Observer Corps. At the head of them was Air Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding as Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Fighter Command, from July 1936 to November 1940. Then he was promoted Air Chief Marshal and went to the United States

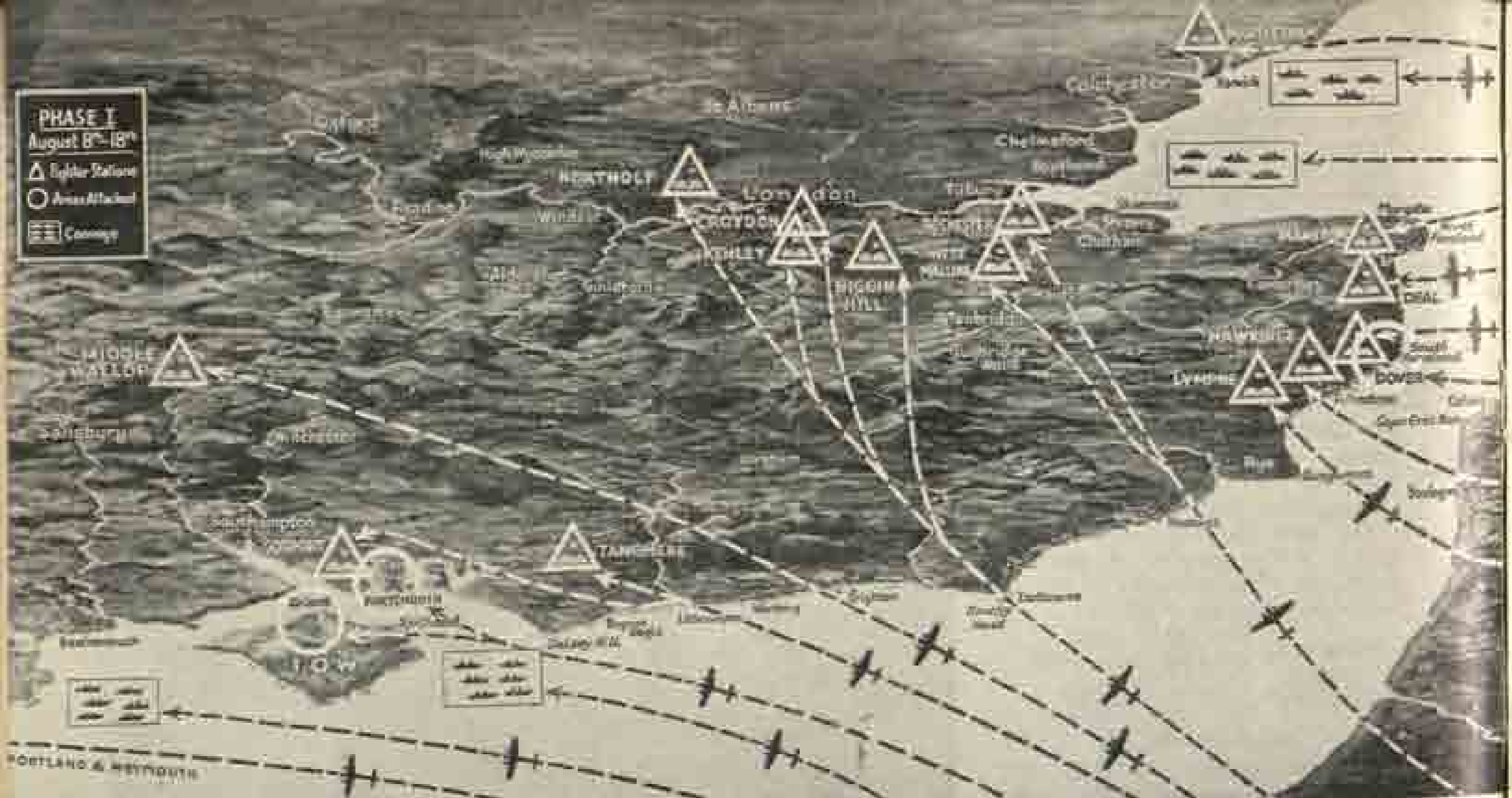


FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE CHANNEL

Marshal Goering and officers of the Luftwaffe staff are seen in the photograph above (received through a neutral country) gazing across the Channel at the coasts they were attacking so fiercely and with so little effect in the first phase of the battle. Below are Nazi airmen, whose 'planes were shot down over Britain in early August, arriving in London under guard.

Photos, E.N.A.; Planet News





BATTLE OF BRITAIN, FIRST PHASE

As the official record pointed out, the air struggle which began on August 8, 1940, was the first great air battle in history—"Nothing like it has ever been fought before in the history of mankind." Here in picture diagram is shown the scope of eleven days' offensive, when massed formations of bombers, escorted by single and twin-engined fighters 5,000 to 10,000 feet above the bombers, made 26 attacks. Convoys, coastal towns and fighter aerodromes were the targets. In the result Goering lost 697 machines against 153 British, with 60 R.A.F. pilots safe.

From the Air Ministry record, "The Battle of Britain"

on special duties. Much of the magnificent achievement of British fighters in the summer and autumn of 1940 was justly ascribed to his inspiring leadership and the brilliant Fighter organization for which he was responsible (see diagram page 1154).

Other leaders in the "first great air battle in history" were the Chief of Air Staff, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Cyril Newall, Air Marshal Sir R. Peirse, Vice-Chief of Air Staff (later in the year to be A.O.C.-in-C., Bomber Command), and Air Marshal W. Sholto Douglas (who succeeded Sir Hugh Dowding in the Fighter Command in November, 1940).

The King to the Fighters

The Secretary of State for Air received on August 16 the following message from His Majesty the King:

Please convey my warmest congratulations to the Fighter Squadrons who, in recent days, have been so heavily engaged in the defence of our country.

I, like all their compatriots, have read with ever-increasing admiration the story of their daily victories. I wish them continued success and the best of luck. GEORGE R.I.

The very great numbers of acts of gallantry and devotion to duty by both air and ground staff that were recorded cannot be listed here, and even more probably went without public or official acknowledgement. The King made an acknowledgement of the nation's gratitude on August 16. The first Victoria Cross to be won by a Fighter pilot in the British Isles was gained by Flight-Lt. James Brindley Nicolson, of No. 249 Squadron, on August 16. The official account ran:

During an engagement near Southampton on August 16, Flight-Lieutenant Nicolson's aircraft was hit by four cannon shells, two of which wounded him, while another set fire to the gravity tank. When about to abandon his aircraft owing to flames in the cockpit he sighted an enemy fighter, which he attacked and shot down, although, as a result of staying in his burning aircraft, he sustained serious burns to his hands, face, neck and legs. Flight-Lieutenant Nicolson has always displayed great enthusiasm for air fighting, and this incident shows that he possesses courage and determination of a high order. By continuing to engage the enemy after he had been wounded and his aircraft set on fire, he displayed exceptional gallantry and disregard for the safety of his own life.



FIRST FIGHTER PILOT V.C.

Flight-Lieut. J. B. Nicolson gained his V.C. on August 16, when on patrol over the Southampton area, in combat with a Messerschmitt 110, whose cannon shells set his Hurricane on fire. (See official story in this page.) *Photo, Planet News*

While this first great air battle was being fought, those for whose security it was waged had but a limited knowledge of what was happening. After the first reactions they showed an increasing indifference to danger. As yet the Luftwaffe had not done its worst—that was to come with the development of night bombing—and the public soon decided that life and work could not be constantly interrupted by going down to shelter.

But sometimes they were excited and gratified by the sight of Nazi bombers and fighters falling like leaves in smoke and flame. A dramatic account of such a battle on Sunday, August 18, seen when picnicking on a





IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE

August 15, 1940, was one of the Fighter Command's really big days, for 183 Nazi aircraft were shot down. These photographs show something of the heat of battle. Top right, Hurricanes come down to re-fuel and re-arm. Below, as the pilot steps from his cockpit to report, his tanks are being refilled. Above, he reports to the station intelligence officer how he shot down two of the enemy. Only minutes elapse before he is in the air again.

Photos, Central Press







WHEN CROYDON WAS RAIDED

The aerial warfare of the summer of 1940 tested not only the famous Anderson shelters but also the substantial brick surface shelters (above, people at Croydon entering one of these on August 16). Right, a Croydon bus damaged in the August 15 raid. These incidents were associated with the raids on the well-known aerodrome.

Photos, Planet News; "Daily Mirror"

ride overlooking the weald of Surrey and Kent, may be quoted. Mr. H. G. Earle, a member of the staff of the Amalgamated Press Ltd., heard enemy bombers in close formation high above.

Anti-aircraft batteries opened fire immediately, and the sky seemed full of fighter aircraft going up in pursuit. . . . In a few seconds a large German bomber hurtled out of the sky like a falling leaf. The pilot managed to gain some control when near the earth and it seemed as though a safe landing might have been possible, but he made a sudden dive, hitting the ground, and the machine immediately burst into an inferno of flame and smoke. It was a terrible scene, taking place just down below us in the valley in broad sunlight. . . .

A big black German bomber planed right across our vision about 200 feet from the earth and, with engines off, was obviously trying to land, when to our amazement there was a burst of machine-gun fire as he swooped over the roof of a farmhouse very near to a golf course. It was astonishing to us that the occupants of a machine in such a perilous position could still machine-gun a farmhouse as they passed over the roof and pancaked into a field half a mile further along apparently undamaged. We were told by someone who was near the field that the machine was a Dornier. . . . After a very short interval we saw a formation of Spitfires bring down two more bombers on the distant hills.

I looked at my watch. The action had lasted thirty-five minutes. Our tense nerves relaxed. It was then we began to realize the perilous position we had been in. The Battle of Britain had been a reality to us. We had seen with admiration the wonderful fighting quality of our fighter pilots. The Surrey countryside was peaceful once again.



NAZI PARACHUTE SCARE

Possibly to raise an alarm of parachutists, empty German parachutes were dropped in some numbers in the Midlands in mid-August, calling out police and military patrols. Above is one found by a patrol.

Photo, Fox

The first phase of the great battle ended officially with the evening attack on the Thames Estuary on August 18, when one squadron of 13 Hurricanes shot down in less than an hour 13 of the enemy without loss to themselves. In the eleven days' fighting (Aug. 8–18) over the shipping and ports of the South-East and East coasts the Luftwaffe had lost no fewer than 697 machines against British losses of 93 pilots and 153 aircraft. There followed an interval of five days, employed by the Germans in reconnaissance over most of the country by single machines, with some spasmodic bombing, chiefly of aerodromes. Then on August 24 the second phase opened.

AFTER THE GERMAN CONQUEST: LIFE IN FRANCE, BELGIUM AND HOLLAND

Systematic Robbery of France — Insidious Propaganda : Sowing of Dissension — A Nation Without Hope — Belgian Industries Shut Down and Agricultural Production Ordered to be Increased—Position of King Leopold—Facing a Winter of Starvation—Stubbornness of the Dutch Infuriated the Nazis : Stern Penalties Imposed — Wholesale Nazi Looting — Holland Refused to be Intimidated

GERMANY'S attitude to those who fell beneath her yoke, while varying in method of application, was consistent (Poland excepted), during the early months of occupation, in that it aimed at three different objects, namely:

(1) Looting of food and raw materials, with the harnessing of remaining economic resources to the Nazi war machine.

(2) Keeping the population quiet by some show of politeness until accounts with Britain had been settled.

(3) Utilization of disaffected elements among the conquered peoples as (*a*) a means of continued Nazi domination, and (*b*) an instrument of foreign policy.

No country was so vitally important to Germany for future policy as France. Although conquered, France was still the only Continental country approaching in population and resources the German economic machine (Russia, of course, being excepted). Though 2,000,000 French soldiers were in German prisoner-of-war camps, and the great French armies had been disarmed and disbanded, the man-power of France could still be of considerable aid to Britain, were the latter to launch a new Continental expedition to coincide with a revolt of the conquered peoples. A nation of 42,000,000 people could not be governed indefinitely with fixed bayonets while Britain held sway across the Channel. A half of France—the unoccupied territory ruled by Marshal Pétain—could still be coaxed, bullied or otherwise induced to modify its policy to Hitler's order so long as the rich occupied territory remained as a pawn in Nazi hands.

In Hitler's dealings with the millions of people under his rule we see alternately coming to the fore and receding again all the considerations enumerated. France was thoroughly and systematically robbed during the first four months of German occupation. In Paris the big stores were crammed with German soldiers buying silk stockings and perfumes unobtainable in Germany. In payment they offered "Occupation" marks, whose promise to pay was unsigned. German soldiers are reported as saying delightedly: "We are living like gods in France." According to the testimony of Miss May Birkhead, an American journalist, who left Paris on July 18, 1940, the Nazis were removing all valuables from private homes and from shops, and were stripping the Place de la Concorde of its statues and bronze lamp-posts.

"The Germans," she alleged, "are stealing right and left. One sees trucks lined up in front of residences. The Germans go into the houses, take an inventory of all household goods, and cart anything valuable away. Art shops have been completely denuded."

This retail robbery was completed by wholesale requisitioning by the German military authorities. No fewer than 23 train-loads of goods taken from Lyons warehouses left that city in one day. At Bordeaux whole consignments of chocolate were spirited away. Travellers from the occupied territory encountered innumerable convoys of confiscated machinery and military equipment. The Nazi haul was rich, for in the Maginot Line alone there were stored provisions, ammunition and arms sufficient to sustain large armies for many months. Huge stocks of rubber and other raw materials fell into German hands, together with the precious machine-tools of armaments works such as Citroen, Schneider-Creusot and others.

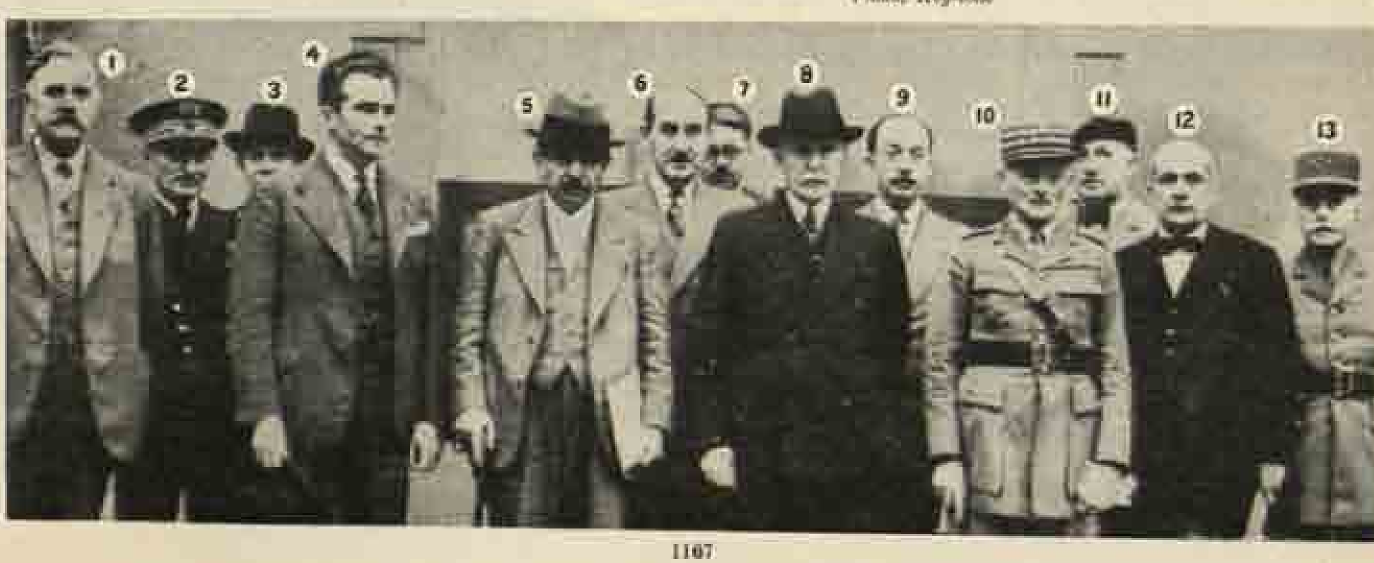
Huge Nazi Plunder

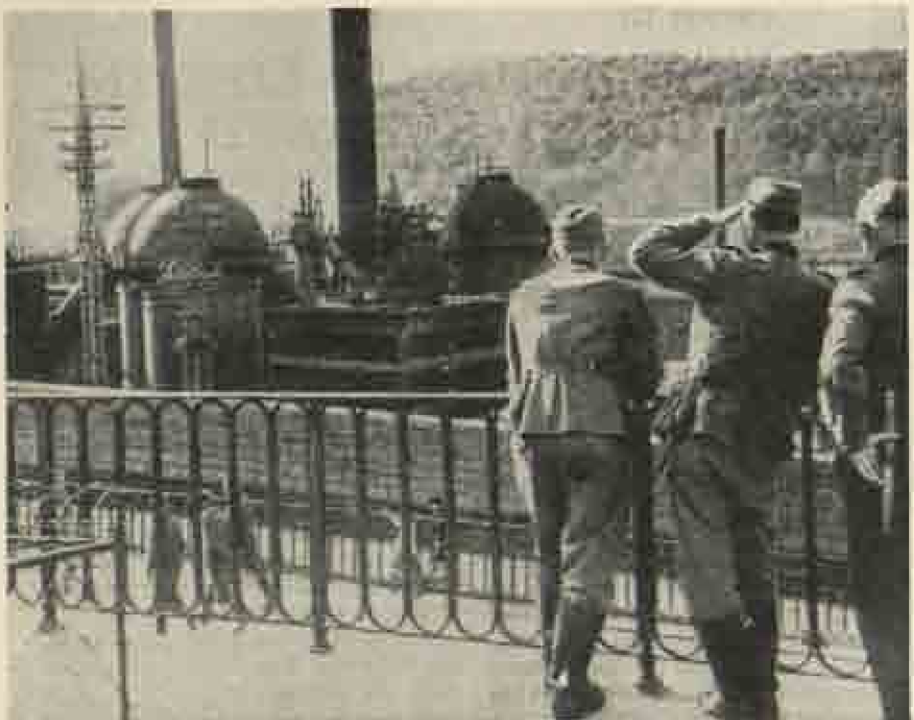
It was significant that while rationing was introduced in occupied France, the bread and butter rations for German children were increased. In their "purchases" the Germans applied the method found so successful in Norway,

MARSHAL PÉTAIN AND THE MEN OF VICHY

In the middle of July, 1940, Pétain reformed his Cabinet, members of which are seen below: 1, M. Caziot; 2, Admiral Darlan; 3, M. Piétri; 4, M. Baudouin; 5, M. Laval; 6, M. Marquet; 7, M. Bouthillier; 8, Marshal Pétain; 9, M. Mireaux; 10, General Weygand; 11, M. Ybarnégaray; 12, M. Lémery; 13, General Colson.

Photo, Keystone





CREUSOT WORKS IN GERMAN HANDS

German soldiers in occupation view the great Schneider armament works at Le Creusot, 55 miles from Dijon. Here the famous 75-mm. field gun was designed and made and every other variety of gun, ordnance and military stores was produced in great quantities. The works covered about 50 acres with 30 miles of private railway line *Photo, Associated Press*

The French affected not to see the goose-stepping columns which defiled the main boulevards of Paris and other cities. Germany paraded her might in order to impress on her subject peoples the futility of revolt, but the events of the past four months had left the French too bewildered to contemplate any sort of resistance. A graphic picture of conditions was drawn by Mr. Walter Kerr of the "New York Herald Tribune."

"German-occupied France is an economically twisted country with millions of people broken in spirit, doped with propaganda, groping about in an effort to reorganize their lives as best they can.

"They have little money, and their homes are destroyed or inaccessible. Food is poor. Men and women are living under restrictions they never knew before, and are more concerned with daily needs than discussions as to what caused the collapse of their country."

"Thousands of the French Army," wrote another correspondent, "stand behind barbed wire and stare with bloodshot eyes at the country wherein once they were free men." But not all Frenchmen were cowed. At Bordeaux the German army authorities threatened penalties for continued sabotage of telegraph and telephone wires. The attitude of the miners in the North was so hostile to the conquerors that the

The rate of the French franc was fixed at 20 to the Reichsmark, instead of the former eight. Reichsmarks were printed in plenty, and the French banks forced to give francs in exchange for them. In effect therefore, the Germans paid nothing for the goods they "bought."

The French banks were also forced to hand over to German banks controlling their business in Alsace-Lorraine all deposits from that region. But they were not allowed to deduct credits, loans and outstanding debts. German business men, rich in francs acquired by the above method, bought controlling interests in numerous French concerns. The French, a traditionally astute race, soon saw through this deceit. They themselves began investing in goods, instead of saving francs which would soon become worthless. The result was a famine in commodities. Prices of eggs, meat, milk, potatoes and butter rose in some cases by more than half. A large proportion of shops, having no stocks, was forced to close.

The commander of the German Army of Occupation had to confer with the heads of five French Departments—Charente-Inférieure, Charente, Gironde, Landes and Basses Pyrénées—on steps necessary to avert a famine. In the event it seemed that France had been so thoroughly despoiled that what was once one of the richest agricultural countries in Europe might have to rely on German supplies for the maintenance of its population during the winter.

"Some 5,000,000 Frenchmen," wrote an American correspondent who completed a 2,000-mile tour of occupied territory, "have been reduced to final humiliation, being fed, clothed and sheltered by the conquerors."

In Paris conditions were bad, but better than in other French cities. Many of these latter had been smashed beyond repair during the invasion and no attempt was made to rebuild them. The water systems of Lille, Amiens, Rheims, Beauvais and many other towns were destroyed by bombs and shells. In scores of debris-littered towns only the main roads had been cleared, to allow the passage of military traffic.

Outwardly, at least, the German soldiers behaved correctly towards the conquered population during the early months,



THIS WAS A LOVELY CITY OF FRANCE

Tours, a city of charm on the Loire was the temporary seat of Government before the capitulation of France in June, 1940. This photograph shows how the city was battered out of recognition by a brutal air bombardment. The dome of the church of St. Martin is seen still standing *Photo, Keystone*

Germans were forced to station armed men of the Emergency Section (Bereitschaftsdienst) in mines and steelworks. Open resistance by the workers was impossible, but ca'canny methods slowed up production considerably. One solution reported to have been adopted by the Germans was the transfer of German miners to certain pits. The French peasant also began to grow less or to hide his stocks when he learned that a large part of the produce he brought to market was going to Germany.

M. Lucien Derne, editor of the Lille newspaper "Echo du Nord," was sentenced to five years' penal servitude by a German military court for allegedly inciting the people to resistance. Neutral observers reported an undercurrent of resistance, particularly noticeable in the towns, where most German propaganda posters were torn down in spite of the death penalty for apprehension in the act; many Frenchmen were listening to London broadcasts, defying German threats of dire punishment. However, with occupied France split up into five zones and movement between them made extremely difficult, there could be no thought of co-ordinated action.

Savage Penalties



MEMORIES OF A 'WAR TO END WAR'

This Nazi soldier, one of the army of occupation in unhappy France, is gazing at the sandbagged trenches on Vimy Ridge, preserved in concrete as a memorial of the battle of April 9-10, 1917, when the ridge was taken from the Germans by Canadian troops.

Photo, Wide World



HOW THE NAZIS PAID THEIR WAY

Purchases made by the German authorities in France were paid for in banknotes printed for the purpose, and of very doubtful value. Here some are being issued after printing in a French newspaper office.

Photo, E.N.A.

At the same time that Germany ravaged stocks of food and raw materials, and prostituted French industry to Nazi ends, she seemed to be attempting, through propaganda in the controlled Press and wireless of occupied France, to create an anti-British and anti-Vichy instrument of French working-class opinion. The Nazis preached hatred of Britain for attacking the French Fleet at Oran and promised the French "revenge." The Socialist aspect of National-Socialist Germany was strongly emphasized, and the New Constitution of Marshal Pétain described as a "political manoeuvre" which promised the workers nothing.

The encouragement in occupied France of conspirators and demagogues like Doriot, the self-styled French peasant leader, seemed to indicate that the Nazis might one day try to replace Pétain with a puppet of their own creation. The French Press in occupied territory became parrot-like in its enunciation of Nazi platitudes. The "Matin" became violently anti-Jewish and anti-British. Louis Burelle, a French printer hitherto unknown, began a news sheet called "Les Dernières Nouvelles de Paris," advocating National Socialism for France. Broadcasts to the French from Stuttgart hinted at the terrible revenge shortly to be taken on the British for the "betrayal of France," and warned Frenchmen to accept their own defeat as final.

To emphasize this, the German radio stated unequivocally that Hitler intended incorporating Calais, Dunkirk and Lille within the German Reich; while any hopes the French may have had regarding Alsace were dashed with the beginning of expulsions from that territory of French-born inhabitants.

At the end of August, 1940, Frenchmen with few exceptions had lost all hope for their own country's future or for that of Britain. Dazed by the enormity of their own defeat, bewildered by German propaganda and cowed by German military might and the harsh penalties for disobeying their German masters, they lived from hand to mouth—concerned only with the problems of existence—which was exactly what the Germans intended.

It is doubtful if the Germans had any considerable hopes of exploiting





HOW FRANCE FARED UNDER THE NAZIS

While over a million French soldiers languished on low diet in German prison camps (top), the presence of Nazi soldiers seemed to pass unnoticed in Paris restaurants (bottom photo). Some of the latter showed notices 'Jews Not Admitted' (centre, right). Families which had fled before the invaders began to return with their salvaged belongings (centre, left)

Photos, E.N.A.; Keystone





Belgium as an adjunct to the Nazi war machine. They knew that the Belgians, a mainly bread-eating people, imported 75 per cent of their wheat, the major supply of which was automatically cut off by Britain's blockade after the Nazi invasion. The destruction of bridges and blocking of canals had been done very thoroughly by the retreating Allied armies, and even if the Germans had not been preoccupied with their planned attempt to invade England, the reconstruction of Belgian economy would have been a big problem.

Nevertheless, some attempt was made to put into operation a scheme whereby Belgium, in common with Denmark and Holland, was to become a purely agricultural country, serving the skilled industrial peoples of the Reich. German business men toured Belgium in considerable numbers. Word went round that all manufacturing industries, with the exception of brick and cement works, would be closed down. The Belgians, the Germans said, were overfed. Production of beer was reduced to 40 per cent of pre-war volume; pasture land was cut down by half in favour of increased arable land; coffee disappeared from shops, and potatoes became the staple food of the people.

Belgian Industries Destroyed

In tightening their grip on Belgium the Nazis were considerably helped by Allied outbursts against King Leopold at the time of the Belgian capitulation. Allegations that King Leopold was a traitor were bitterly resented by the Belgians and much exploited by the German conquerors. The Nazis also made much of the fact that the Belgian Premier (M. Pierlot) and his Cabinet had "left Belgians to their fate" and had gone to France when Belgium was overrun. An additional factor in the temporary success of Nazi propaganda was the conviction, reigning among the overawed and dispirited Belgians at the end of August, that the defeat of Great Britain was only a matter of weeks.



A CURIOSITY OF PROPAGANDA

This 'popularity shrine' to King Leopold, outside the Royal Palace at Brussels, was said to have been erected by the Germans, and prominent Nazis were stated to have placed flowers upon it. What they hoped to gain can only be conjectured.

Photo, E.N.A.

The tramp of Nazi jackboots on their pavements, the drone of Nazi warplanes overhead in training for the intended attack on Britain, following the savage success of the German "Panzer" Divisions in their sweep through Belgium, seemed, in most Belgian eyes, to make acquiescence in Nazi domination the only alternative to suicide. German soldiers behaved correctly. Individual acts of looting by them were severely punished, but mass pillage in the buying up of goods for worthless marks swiftly despoiled Belgian warehouses and shops.

King Leopold, a prisoner in his castle, refused collaboration with the conquerors. The exact whereabouts of the Belgian Government in France was unknown. The best of Belgium's technicians were in prisoner-of-war camps. Some 2,000,000 Belgian refugees, it was estimated, were still in France. A winter of starvation loomed ahead. At the end of August the Belgians hardly dared to hope for a British victory. Defeatism reigned supreme, and isolated acts of sabotage were mere pin-pricks to the mighty Nazi war machine so firmly entrenched amid an alien population.

In Holland the Nazis had a more difficult task. The Dutch proved

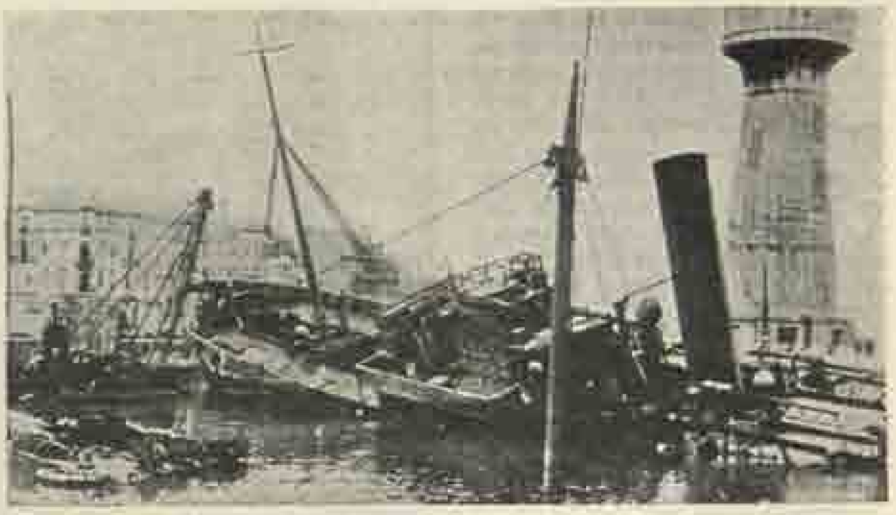


WINES FOR BELGIUM'S CONQUERORS

As in France, the cost of the occupation in Belgium was financed by a charge upon the invaded territory, and goods requisitioned were paid for in special currency. Here Nazi orderlies are procuring wine in a Belgian shop for the officers' mess.

Photo, E.N.A.

stubborn even in defeat and the Germans were soon compelled to abandon the "velvet glove" method by which they had hoped to rule the country. The dismissal of high officials such as M. de Monchy, popular Burgomaster of The Hague, and General Winkelmann, Dutch C.I.C. (see illus., page 841), for refuting allegations of pre-invasion plans for military aid between Holland and the Allies, the replacement by Nazi-minded Dutchmen of the executives of the Dutch Trade Union Movement (300,000 strong)—these went hand in hand with the suspension of newspaper editors and the most severe warnings by the German military authorities of the penalties Dutchmen would incur by continued opposition.



PREVENTIVE ACTION BY THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

With Dutch ports in their hands the Nazis began to attack Britain more closely by air and sea. In order to check this peril the R.A.F. bombed enemy-occupied ports, and this photograph shows the effect of an attack on a Dutch harbour.

Photo, Keystone

The German military commander, General Christiansen, made a significant admission of the Dutch attitude to the conquerors when he issued in August a proclamation which, after giving several instances of "insults to the justified pride" of the German soldiers who were not saluted by members of the Dutch forces, threatened the death penalty against those who assaulted German officials.

Christiansen's Warning

A similar penalty was threatened for persons concealing or assisting enemy soldiers or airmen. Point was given to the warning by the offer of a reward for the apprehension of the 12 occupants of a British 'plane alleged to have landed in an isolated Dutch province, another reward for the recovery of a large iron box dropped by parachute from a British 'plane, and by revelations that the effective bombing of military objectives by the R.A.F. was believed to have been done through Dutch connivance with the British authorities.

In the streets Dutchmen looked the other way when Germans came along. They avoided cinemas where German news reels were shown. At The Hague on June 29, Prince Bernhard's birthday, enthusiastic Dutch demonstrations had to be dispersed by the Germans, who cleared the streets and mounted machine-guns. Dutchmen fought in the evening with Nazi gangs and German soldiers. A number of people were killed and order was not restored until German dive-bombers patrolled menacingly over the city.





VOICE OF THE CONQUEROR

Proclamations, orders and a Nazi version of the latest news were given out to the Dutch by means of loudspeaker vans. Inset shows a German officer at the microphone in a Netherlands town.

Photos, E.N.A.

Meanwhile, as in France and Belgium, wholesale looting was the order of the day. Holland was well stocked with goods of all sorts desirable to the Nazis, for she had a large export trade. In one week 18,000,000 lb. of butter went to Germany, reserves of clothing and tobacco were requisitioned on an enormous scale, and Holland, former land of plenty, was rationed for oil and fat, tea and coffee. The blockade which followed the German invasion, cutting off imports of cattle food, led to the slaughter of a great part of Holland's excellent dairy herds. Thousands of unemployed Dutch workmen were recruited against their will for German docks and factories.

But as a nation the Dutch refused to be intimidated. The deliberate slaughter of 30,000 civilians by the Luftwaffe in the terrible raid on Rotterdam during the invasion and the devastation of Middelburg and other old Dutch cities left them with bitter memories and made collaboration with the Nazis impossible.

Cheered by repeated R.A.F. raids on military objectives in Holland and over the German frontier, assiduous listeners to the broadcasts of their beloved Queen Wilhelmina and of the Dutch Ministers safe in London, the people of the Netherlands refused to believe in the possibility of a British defeat. German efforts to make them hate England for "bringing war upon Holland" were entirely unsuccessful.

Loyalty to Queen Wilhelmina

At the end of August the Dutch, in the words of the correspondent of the Berlin newspaper "B.Z. am Mittag," "were in no way grateful to the Germans and refused everything German unless they could make profit out of it."

HITLER'S 'NEW ORDER' IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, POLAND, NORWAY AND DENMARK

Nazi Black Guards and Gestapo Persecute Czechs—Machinations of the Vladka—Deportation for Forced Labour—Systematic Suppression in Poland—'Black Monday'—Government-General Poland Incorporated in the Reich—Norway Under Terboven—Major Quisling—King Haakon's Splendid Example—Denmark Despoiled of Food and Livestock: Plunder of National Assets

An opinion spread assiduously by German business men in their endeavours to curry favour in occupied countries was that Nazi oppression of peoples under their rule would last only until German victory was assured. Then, these men urged, the Nazis would be in a benevolent mood; the age of security and plenty would be inaugurated; the enthusiasm of the early Nazi revolutionaries would be tempered with the moderation born of success. There were those even among the oppressed peoples who gave ear to such whisperings. Although their deepest instincts told them that liberty could come only with an Allied victory, when that victory began to seem remote (as after the swift collapse of France) they clutched at any straw of comfort.

Black Guards and Gestapo

But Nazi behaviour in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, and Norway undid the propaganda of German business men who flocked to these countries for trade purposes. There was no relaxation of oppression, but, indeed, an increase. The Black Guards and other Gestapo agents resented reproaches secretly made against them in Germany to the effect that, while German soldiers did the fighting, the Gestapo abroad lived in security and luxury. To counteract these reproaches they became more zealous in finding "conspiracies" and arresting "trouble-makers," with a view to proving that they also were making their contribution to Hitler's projected World Empire.

In Prague some of the men who had publicly welcomed the Germans a year before—and had been reviled for it by their compatriots—were thrown into prison by swaggering Gestapo and Black Guard youths. Many Social-Democrats and Left-Wing politicians, hitherto unscathed, disappeared. Local government officials followed them. Dr. Klapka, mayor of Prague, who had been congratulated by the Germans a few weeks earlier, was arrested. So, too, was the city's prominent official, Dr. Nestavak. Dr. Wenig, a famous Czech professor, was tortured until his mind gave way. The whereabouts of Dr. Matejka, a brother professor in the Legal Faculty of the Caroline University, became unknown, as also of the writers Josef Kopta and Jan Grmela.

The Vladka—a German-controlled Czech Fascist organization composed largely of riff-raff—was urged on to ever greater excesses. The Gestapo was behind a clash between this Party and Prague citizens in August, 1940, when the headquarters of the Czech National Unity Party, just disbanded by the Germans, was raided. The Vladka hooligans looted the National Unity Party headquarters and beat up the staff. They were accompanied by Nazi storm troopers. Whatever hopes the Nazis may have had of forming a successful Czech Fascist Party were dispelled by the reception afforded to members of the Vladka after this outrage. They were hissed and booed as heartily as the German storm troopers.

Hand in hand with increasing oppression went further restrictions on Czech liberty and institutions. Education, the goal of every young Czech, was hindered by an order banning the building of Czech elementary and secondary schools. Every Czech university was closed, and the few avenues of education left open after the reprisals which followed the student outbreak in November were imperilled. Publishers' and booksellers' stocks were confiscated.

Almost everywhere Czech industries were closed down in favour of German industries. Machinery from Czech factories was sent to Russia and to South America, and huge quantities went to the armaments factories of the Reich. A compulsory labour law was passed which meant enslavement to their German masters of all Czech men between the ages of 16 and 70. Three hundred thousand Czech workmen were transported to the Reich to eke out an existence on starvation wages. From the industrial area around Moravska Ostrava no fewer than 11,000 workmen were removed in a few weeks. For those workmen who remained in the Protectorate the standard of living fell ever lower, as retail prices of most



GERMAN MOBILE KITCHENS OUTSIDE PRAGUE

So great was the disorganization caused by the Nazi invasion and occupation of Moravia that for long after, in order to avert famine, the Germans were obliged to feed the Czechs from mobile kitchens such as these.

Photo, E.N.A.

commodities rose to levels from one-third to two-thirds higher than before the German occupation.

But the Czechs were far from beaten. Dr. Benes, the President, told an audience in London:

"From reports reaching us we are quite clearly perceiving that moral strength and faith in the future and assurance of victory are increasing among Czech people. A vast system of passive resistance is being built up throughout the country."

By secret organizations and subterfuge the Czechs tricked the Nazi censorship, listened-in to broadcasts from London and prepared for the day when a united effort, coinciding with a military defeat of Germany by the Allies, would give them the longed-for deliverance.

An encouraging feature was the extent to which Nazi officials could be corrupted by money bribes. To people who recalled the similar state of affairs which existed in Germany in 1917 the internal rottenness of the Nazi system was apparent.

It is beyond the power of writing to convey a comprehensive picture of the atrocities and the plundering which characterized Nazi rule in Poland during these months of May to August, 1940.



GLOATING OVER TERRORISM

In a tricycle-taxi, pedalled by a Pole, two members of the German air force go on a sightseeing trip around Warsaw's ruins to view the damage done by the Luftwaffe's ruthless bombing.



IN OCCUPIED POLAND—A NEW GHETTO

Turning back the hands of the clock, the Nazis re-established in Poland the ghetto system, which confined Jews in a walled-off portion of the city and excluded them from intercourse with non-Jews. In this photograph the whole tragedy of the Jews in Warsaw is symbolized by the new and solid brick wall built across the middle of the street.

Polish Mass Martyrdom

The most that can be done is to quote typical instances, and leave the reader to multiply them ten thousandfold, to cover every village, community, town and farmstead in occupied Poland. Centuries ago Teuton robber barons who styled themselves the "Knights of the Sword" overran the territory now occupied by Poland and that of the Baltic States. Their ruthlessness even for those fierce times was so outstanding that it passed into tradition, but it was outdone by the travesty of a feudal system introduced by the Nazis into Poland. The German talent for organization was applied systematically to the suppression of a nation of 33,000,000 people. The Nazis were fearful that even the hardened German public would be critical of some of their deeds, and early in 1940 the Berlin Ministry of Propaganda ordered all German journals to write as little as possible about Poland.

The deportation of Polish men and women for slave services in Germany continued. All unemployed Poles of both sexes between the ages of 16 and 25 had to register. In Germany inadequate food, miserable wages, and extremely hard work were their lot. A grim light







GLIMPSES OF POLAND UNDER THE NAZIS

These revealing photographs were taken surreptitiously at Warsaw, Lublin and Cracow by a Swiss journalist. Jewish women and children wait in a queue for food (top) at Warsaw. Centre, left, women together with men too weak for other work, are set to pull a heavy road roller. **Centre, right,** Jews wearing the yellow arm-band with the Star of David are seen fleeing from Cracow in a wagon. At the entrance to the Warsaw ghetto (below, right) is the official notice 'Closed on account of Epidemic.' People may pass through only. Jews were compelled to use special compartments in trains (centre below). Iron railings were torn from balconies of Jewish dwellings (left, below) and sent to Germany for melting down.









THE BADGE OF JEWRY

Rather than face the cruelties of forced labour in the Reich, many Polish people bought armlets such as the Jews were compelled to wear, like those here seen being vended in Warsaw.

Photo, Polish Ministry of Information

is thrown on this traffic by the fact that Poles anxious to escape deportation preferred even the pariah existence of a Jew in occupied territory, and at one time from 10 to 50 zloty (the par value of a zloty was 10d.) were being paid in Warsaw for a Jewish armlet.

Within the confines of the General Government set up by Hitler as the national home of the Poles—it comprised territories in and around Warsaw, Cracow, Lublin and Radom—mass arrests and round-ups were everyday occurrences. August 12 became known as "Black Monday": several Warsaw streets were cordoned off, pedestrians and inhabitants arrested, and some 20,000 deported to Germany. Many Poles died under torture for refusing to renounce their nationality, including Mr. H. Brun, chairman of the Association of Polish Merchants. Mr. Maciej Rataj, leader of the Polish Peasant Party, died under Gestapo cross-examination. Stefan Starzynski, the former mayor of Warsaw (*see* illus., page 127), was reported to have died in Dachau concentration camp for the unforgivable sin of having resisted the German armies.

A visitor to Warsaw towards the middle of 1940 said:

> "Warsaw is crowded with refugees from the Western areas of Poland, whom the Germans have driven out of their homes and away from their workplaces. Among them are former landowners, professors, officers, business men and artisans. Almost all of them are without means of existence . . . . Only mournful, emaciated, pale faces are to be seen. Clothes and boots are usually in tatters. But the Germans, freshly arrived, have a prosperous and arrogant appearance."

In the countryside the peasants were compelled by an efficient and scientific system of exploitation to deliver quotas of cereals, fodder, oil seeds, wool, flax and hemp. In return the peasant was promised textiles, petroleum, alcohol and tobacco up to a quarter of the value of the goods delivered to the German authorities.

In order still further to blight the hopes of the Poles, Dr. Frank, the brutal governor, told the Congress of the Nazi Party in Cracow on August 15, 1940, that the Government-General was no longer to be regarded as occupied territory but would form an integral part of the area under the rule of Greater Germany. "In this area," he added, "the Nazi Party is building up its bastion for all times. The Polish nation is again—as it was more than 700 years ago—under the protective rule of the German nation."

Polish Culture Attacked

But the Germans also made a gross attack on Polish culture. The Cross on the Faliszewski Bridge in Poznan, erected by the citizens in the 17th century in gratitude for deliverance from a plague, was sawn off and thrown into the River Warta. In certain districts of Pomorze, in Western Poland, Polish inscriptions on the tombstones were changed into German. The Kochanowski memorial outside the Cathedral in Poznan was blown up. Houses were demolished to give a view from a castle constructed by the Germans during the previous occupation. Churches and cathedrals were closed; all priests from the age of 35 upwards were deported to Germany and Austria for work, or sent to the Dachau concentration camp. Monasteries were also closed and the monks dispersed.

The wholesale executions of Poles were indicated only in part by announcements in the Press. Poles were now shot for anti-German activities during the months prior to the German occupation. Sentences of 15 years' hard labour were given for such trivial offences as misappropriating a Nazi badge. But far

SORRY PLIGHT OF POLISH FARMERS

Under threat of harsh penalties, or even death, the farmers of Poland were made to till their land for the benefit of the Nazis. While monster tanks thunder by, this farm worker drives a harrow. Fixed quotas of cereals, fodder and textile fibres were demanded by the Nazis from the Poles

Photo, Keystone







FORCED LABOUR IN NORWAY

Strategic roads were built for the Germans by forced labour. Among the Norwegian newspapers, 'Fritt Folk' was the chief Quislingist journal, and 'Deutsche Zeitung' the leading German one. The title of the secret newspaper 'Vi Vil Oss et Land' means 'We Want a Country for Ourselves.'

Photos, E.N.A.; 'The Times'

more numerous were murders committed by the Gestapo and their agents without Press publicity. The brutal activities of the Gestapo "dusk-to-dawn" gangs—the screams of women, the crack of revolver shots, the groans of bludgeoned victims as they were forced into waiting prison vans—heralded a reign of terror during the night hours which was quite ineffective in breaking the spirit of those against whom it was employed.

Hitler's gauleiters, instruments to carry out his policy of persecution in occupied countries, were well chosen. The inhuman and cynically efficient Frank, governor of Poland, was a lawyer by profession and was suspected of bringing about the death of more than one anti-Nazi general. Greiser, governor of Western Poland, was an imitation Goering, fond of showy uniforms and medals, who had once led a gang of toughs in Danzig to beat up Polish workmen and officials. He had been unsuccessful in many occupations—as mason, oil merchant and motor-boat owner—before he found his berth in Poland, where, governing from a magnificent castle in Danzig, he uttered the maxim: "The Nazi teacher must sow loathing for the Poles."

But in Poland the Nazis found no quislings. A Press campaign designed to persuade the Polish people to abandon all forms of passive resistance, bound up, it was believed, with the possible offer of a "Pétainship" to the Polish landowner, Prince Janusz Radziwill, fizzled out with the latter's refusal to accept office.

Nazi rule in Norway, under Reichskommissar Terboven (a man with many murders of Allied soldiers in the Rhineland to his credit), favoured the velvet glove rather than the mailed fist. The Germans had always entertained hopes that the "Nordic" Norwegian would prove more receptive to Nazi philosophy than the Latin or Slav. The comparative ease with which Norway had been occupied seemed to afford excellent anti-Allied propaganda. "You were deserted by Britain and France" was a cry which many despairing and dejected Norwegians took up at first. In Major Quisling, the traitor, the Nazis found a useful instrument in the exploitation of the country by the Reich. The rock on which these hopes were shattered was Norwegian loyalty to the exiled King Haakon. So long as he occupied the dominant place in Norwegian affections Quisling could make no headway.

The first Governing Committee set up by Major Quisling entirely failed to impress the Norwegians. The Nazis then tried to form an all-Norwegian committee composed of prominent business men and former members of the Storting. In order to induce prominent Norwegians to take part in this new Council of Administration the Nazis argued that the interests of the people

FATE OF THE CRUISER 'BLUECHER'

During the invasion of Norway the heavy cruiser 'Bluecher,' commissioned only a few months earlier, was sunk by mine or by Norwegian batteries in Oslo Fjord on April 9, 1940. Here is the German memorial to her officers and crew, on the Ekkeberg, near Oslo. (See page 822.)





DENMARK SUBMITTED TO NAZI OCCUPATION

Cowed by Nazi threats and impotent to resist, Denmark gave passage to the German armies on April 9, 1940. Here Danish soldiers are saluting Nazi sentries at the entrance to the Citadel of Copenhagen

Photo, E.N.A.

could be better served by Norwegian politicians cooperating with the Nazis than by a purely German or Quisling administration. They succeeded in convincing some of the members of the Council that no new life for Norwegians could begin so long as King Haakon was the legally constituted ruler. This was at a time when, following the collapse of France and the foreshadowed "decisive" attack on Britain, the Allies' fortunes seemed at a low ebb. By misrepresenting the circumstances of King Haakon's departure and concealing the true state of affairs existing between the King and the Storting at the time of his journey to Britain, the Nazis induced certain members to enter into correspondence with the King to persuade him to resign.

This attempt came to grief when the Norwegians learned the truth. In a notable broadcast from London, King Haakon denied (1) that he had quarrelled with the British Government and had gone to America; (2) that the Storting had authorized him to cease fighting Germany, or that he had lost the confidence of the Storting; and (3) that Norway's difficulties were due to his flight. "On the contrary," he said, "if we had stayed in the country the present rulers of Norway would have been able to force us to accept what they desired."

This marked the end of Germany's second effort to induce Norwegians to collaborate with the invaders. Meanwhile, the German armies of occupation continued to live on the country, using a form of currency manipulation much the same as that applied in occupied France. At the same time Germany began to turn Norway into a huge military camp. Roads were built to bring heavy war material and tanks to the West coast. Oslo schools were converted into barracks. Aerodromes, wireless control stations, A.A. and field guns and portable kitchens were dotted along the coast.

But Quisling's newspaper, "Fritt Folk," admitted bitterly that the Norwegians would rather listen to the London broadcasts than to those from Oslo. A standing joke in Oslo was that Major Quisling dined in the mirror hall of a famous hotel there in order that, seeing his reflection, he could convince himself that he was not the only member of the Norwegian Nazi Party!

Looting Danish Livestock

The effect of the Nazi occupation of Denmark can best be shown by some representative statistics. Ten thousand horned cattle went weekly to Germany during the early months of occupation. The production of butter, of which Denmark was formerly Europe's chief exporter, fell so drastically that rationing was introduced. Egg production fell by 37 per cent, following huge "exports" of poultry to Germany. When the Nazi plunder of Denmark was at its height the credits in the clearing account with foreign countries (i.e. Germany) of the Danish National Bank were rising by 75–100,000 kroner a month. Germany would presumably pay this money back when and if she won the war.

With increasing unemployment (especially in Copenhagen), decreasing stocks of food, and acute signs of inflation owing chiefly to Germany's plunder of the nation's assets, Denmark at the end of August 1940 could derive comfort only from the fact that her stocks were irreplaceable. By the improvident plundering and slaughter of livestock the Germans were gradually "killing the goose which laid the golden eggs," and succeeding months were to show a continuous and inevitable decline in German "purchases" of Danish produce.



FIRST-FRUITS OF THE GERMAN CONTROL

As in every country they occupied, the Germans soon despoiled Denmark of food and fuel. Owing to the wholesale requisitioning of petrol for the use of the invaders the fuel became so scarce that the fine motor-buses of Copenhagen had to be hauled by teams of horses.

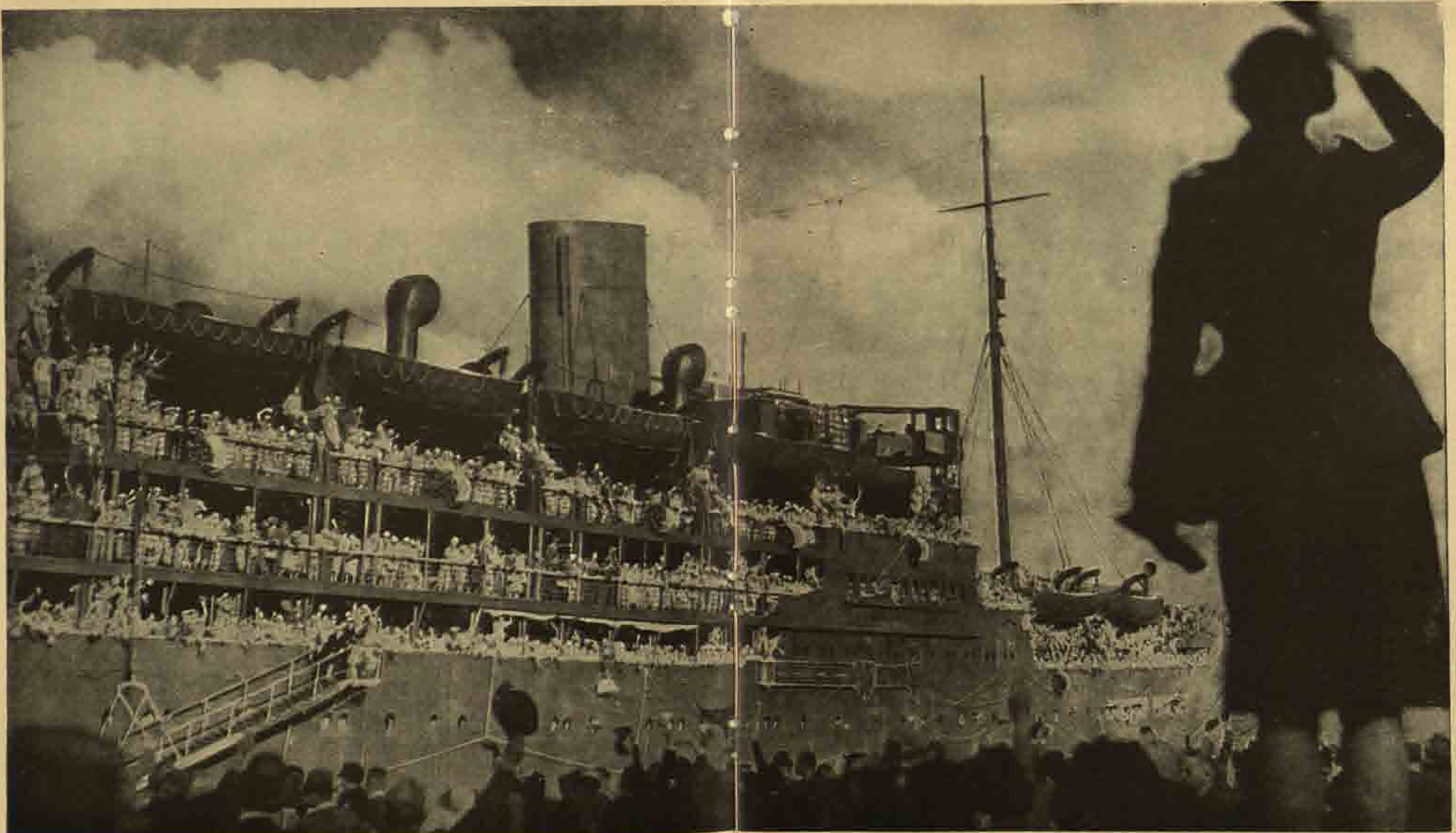
Photo, E.N.A.



ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY PROTECTED BRITISH CONVOYS

In June, 1940, the first units of the Royal Canadian Navy arrived in British ports. Canadian destroyers such as these played a very valuable part in escort duty and the shepherding of convoys across the Atlantic, tasks that were beginning to tax the resources of the Royal Navy to the utmost.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS EMBARK FOR THE EAST AFRICAN WAR ZONE

Though at first a small section had favoured neutrality, the people of the Union of South Africa, guided and inspired by General Smuts, wholeheartedly supported Britain in her struggle with Nazidom. The South African Air Force won renown in East Africa, and the Dominion Army sent large contingents to defend Kenya: here is a troopship leaving a Union port for East Africa in August, 1940. In the foreground, a member of the South African Women's Auxiliary Services waves an adieu. Union troops were later to achieve fame in other African war zones.

Photo, Fox



Photo, Central Press

MEN FROM BRITAIN'S OLDEST COLONY RALLY TO HER DEFENCE

In the sombre days that followed the capitulation of France the people of Britain were cheered by the steady flow of men from the Dominions to aid in the defence of the homeland. Here artillerymen from Newfoundland are seen with a 9·2 howitzer "somewhere in England." On account of their physique, Newfoundlanders make good gunners, and many have, in fact, gone into the Royal Artillery.

WAR EFFORT OF THE BRITISH DOMINIONS DURING THE SUMMER OF 1940

Australians in Egypt—Building Her Own Ships—Australian Navy and Air Force—Canadians For the British Garrison—R.C.N. and R.C.A.F.—Enormous Industrial Output—Full Speed Ahead in New Zealand—Foodstuffs and Textiles for Britain—New Zealanders in the R.A.F.—South Africans Defend Kenya—Smuts' Inspiring Message—The S.A. Air Force—Southern Rhodesia: 'Four Square With Britain'—Rhodesian Squadrons for the R.A.F.

Through the spring and summer months of 1940, when nothing seemed to stay the march of Hitler's mechanized hordes, Britain was buttressed in her defiant resistance by the support of her daughter states in the British Commonwealth. Country after country on the Continent was crushed beneath the wheels of Hitler's tanks, people after people was slimed over by his wiles and menaces, city and town and village were smashed into ruin by his bombing aeroplanes. Yet to each new victory his principal foe answered with a power constantly replenished from across the seas.

"Australia stands behind Britain with the last ounce of her energy, self-sacrifice and devotion." So spake the Australian Premier, Mr. Menzies, when broadcasting to his people on May 14, a few days after the rape of Belgium and Holland. Canada spoke in the same decisive tone. On May 21 the Premier, Mr. Mackenzie King, when announcing various measures for speeding up the Dominion's war effort, declared that "we shall muster to the utmost the strength of this country so that we may make our full contribution to the triumph of right which must and will prevail." From New Zealand and South Africa, and, indeed, from every corner of the Commonwealth, came echoes of the same great resolve; and when, after a month of tremendous fighting, the Battle of France was decided, the Empire spoke once again with united voice. France had fallen, but, said Mr. Menzies on June 17, "this is not the end of the war; on the contrary, it is the beginning of the most bitter and most crucial phase. As long as Britain is unconquered, the world can be saved, and that Britain can or will be conquered is unthinkable." But the free peoples of the world must get together for a great stand . . .

Under Mr. Menzies' leadership Australia was swift to rise to the challenge of the new danger. On June 21 the Emergency Powers Bill, providing for the full mobilization of all the resources of the Commonwealth, received the assent of the Governor-General. A proclamation of November 30, 1939, had made all unmarried males, or widowers without children, liable for military service in Australia, but now the Government was given full power to call up and train men of every category, though there was no conscription for service



AUSTRALIAN TROOPS FOR EGYPT

This photograph shows a troopship leaving Melbourne with some of the second contingent of the Australian Imperial Force in May, 1940. Many veterans of the First Great War, like the soldier seen on guard in the foreground, joined the A.I.F. Reserve.

Photo, Associated Press

BRINGING IT HOME TO BRITONS

Here are four of a series of posters issued by the Home Government to help Britons to realize the large part played in the war effort by the Dominions, not only in furnishing men for the armed forces but also in providing the 'sinews of war.'

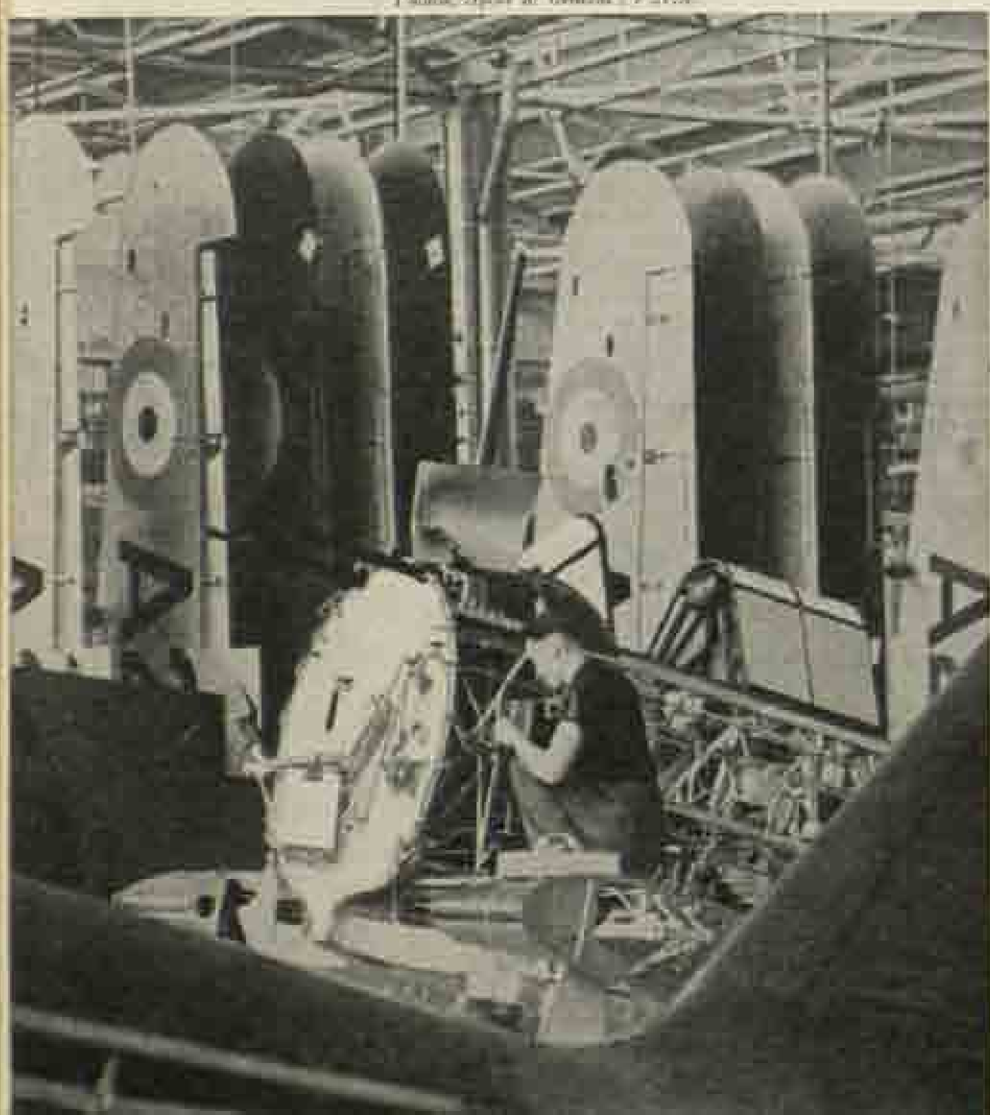




AUSTRALIA MAKES HER OWN GUNS AND AIRCRAFT

Not only did the Dominion of Australia send her sons in many thousands to fight for Britain: she also embarked on the manufacture of arms and aircraft. Top, an A.A. gun being unloaded at a port in Victoria for firing tests; below, Wirraway aircraft in course of production at a Commonwealth factory near Melbourne.

Photos, Sport & General; P.N.A.



overseas. The Australian Labour Party, which since the war of 1914-18 had taken up a strong stand against compulsory military training, now accepted the principle of conscription, on the understanding that the nation's material resources were conscripted likewise. On July 31 men up to 24 years old were called up, and 95,000 went into training.

The Australian Imperial Force which, unlike the Citizen Army, could be employed outside the Australasian theatre of war, was still to be recruited on a voluntary basis, and its strength was fixed temporarily at 90,000 men. By June 16 some 20,000 men of the A.I.F. had already been sent abroad. A contingent had arrived in Egypt as early as February 12 and others reached the United Kingdom between May 16 and the latter half of July. In Australia, during the four weeks ending June 11, 41,400 men were enlisted for the Force. The home defence force had also grown rapidly before the introduction of conscription, and at the end of June this national militia stood at over 100,000.

Early in August there were 12,000 men in the Royal Australian Navy as compared with 5,400 before the war. Thousands more were in the Naval Volunteer Reserve.

Royal Australian Navy

Units of the R.A.N. were operating in the Red Sea and the Mediterranean quite early in the war; and in June, 1940, H.M.A.S. "Voyager" sank an Italian submarine, and on July 19 H.M.A.S. "Sydney" sent to the bottom the crack Italian cruiser, "Bartolomeo Colleoni" (see page 1082). In April, 1940, a contraband control system was brought into operation from Australian ports; and Australian warships also gave great assistance in convoying successive contingents of troops to the war zone.

The Royal Australian Air Force was on active service in the United Kingdom, Egypt, Palestine and Malaya. Enlistments in the R.A.A.F. and the Empire Air Training Scheme soon exceeded 125,000 men, and in the period under review some 30,000 were already in training. The personnel of the R.A.A.F., only 2,000 when the war broke out, was nearly trebled in the first year, while nearly 19,000 men were in training.

In industry also the Australian Government was already exercising sweeping powers granted by the Legislature. A Department of Munitions, with Mr. Menzies as Minister of Munitions and Mr. Essington Lewis as Director-General, was set up in May to accelerate supplies for Australia and other parts of the Empire. Practically all munitions and armaments for the Australian

forces at home and abroad were now being made in Australia, in Government-owned factories or at railway workshops and private engineering works which had been placed under Government control.

At the end of June it was announced in Canberra that the Government was planning to open many new factories for the production of still further types of munitions, including anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns of increased range. At the same time plans were made to increase the production of explosives and munitions of all calibres, machine-guns, A.A. guns and armoured cars. Very shortly, it was stated, Australia would be producing £100,000,000 worth of munitions, and in the various munition works 150,000 men and women would find employment. Every shipyard in Australia was brought into commission, and new yards were established, where new ships for the United Kingdom—destroyers, anti-submarine craft and patrol ships—might be constructed. Nor was the air arm neglected. Contracts were signed for the production of large numbers of Bristol Beaufort bombers, Wirraway second-line fighters, and Tiger Moth trainers. In July De Havillands were delivering a Tiger Moth a day from their works in Sydney, and within three months expected to deliver twenty a day.

Australia Makes Guns

Further, Australia was also making a vast contribution to the Empire's war effort in the shape of raw materials and foodstuffs. The United Kingdom bought the whole exportable surplus of Australia's copper, zinc, tungsten, and tungsten ores, the whole of the Australian wool clip for the period of the war and one year after, huge quantities of wheat and flour as well as all the available supplies of Queensland sugar, and the Dominion's entire surplus of dairy produce, meat, and dried and canned fruits.

In July, 1940, it was announced that Australia's defence expenditure would amount to £453,000,000, spread over three years—an amount equal to the total Australian expenditure in the last war; defence and war expenditure for 1939–40 was over £55,000,000. The money was raised, as in Britain, by taxes, internal loans, and the sale of war bonds and war savings certificates.

Equally with Australia, Canada was flinging her all into the common struggle. Before the war there were some on both sides of the Atlantic who expressed the opinion that the North American Dominion would never



CANADA PRODUCES VITAL WAR MATERIALS ON LARGE SCALE

From the nickel mines of Canada comes nine-tenths of this indispensable metal, and the photograph below shows part of a huge aisle of Bessemer ovens in which the ores are treated on the spot. Another phase of the Dominion's vast war effort is the manufacture of small arms; Bren guns are being made in the Toronto factory seen above.

Photos, P.N.A.; Planet News





'ROYAL CANADIANS' WHO PROTECTED ICELAND

When, after the Nazi invasion of Denmark on April 9, 1940, it became necessary to safeguard the important territory of Iceland, a number of Canadian troops was landed there. Here, encamped some ten miles from Reykjavik, is an advance party of men from the Dominion.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

again permit herself to be involved in a European struggle; they pointed out that in 1914 a very large proportion of the Canadians who went overseas were British-born, but that section of the population was now much smaller, owing to the growth of the pure Canadian element.

But how these prophets were deceived! In 1939 Canada entered the war as a united nation—united, indeed, as never before. Even before the war's first Christmas the first Canadian division was in England, and all through the succeeding months the stream of men crossing the Atlantic continued. The second division began to arrive in this country on August 2. In June, 1940, Mr. C. G. Power, Acting Defence Minister, announced that the Canadian armed forces numbered 113,893, made up of army in Canada, 64,656, army outside Canada, 26,087; Royal Canadian Navy, 7,256, and Royal Canadian Air Force, 15,894. These were all volunteers; and although by the Compulsory Service Act, which became law on June 20, 1940, Canadian manhood, like Canadian industry, was brought within the sphere of compulsion, military service abroad continued to be entirely voluntary. On June 4 Mr. Mackenzie King stated that Canadian troops had been dispatched to the British West Indies, to free British regular troops there for duties elsewhere; and a fortnight later he announced that a Canadian contingent had joined the British garrison in Iceland.

At the outbreak of war the personnel of the Royal Canadian Navy numbered 1,700, but before the end of the first year of war its figure had reached 9,000. Certain of its units were on active duty in the Caribbean Sea, the North Atlantic and European waters. One of its destroyers, H.M.C.S. "Fraser," was lost at Bordeaux in June when engaged in the evacuation of the British troops from France. Then, as for the Royal Canadian Air Force, its strength at the end of July was over 19,000 men, and men were being enlisted at the rate of 1,000 a week. Squadrons of the Royal Canadian Air Force early found a place in the defence of the United Kingdom, the first ever to leave the Dominion being an Army Cooperation Squadron which arrived in Britain on February 25. Units of the R.C.A.F. which landed in June brought with them their own aeroplanes and all their equipment; a fighter squadron arrived early in August. In that summer which saw the Battle of Britain more than 1,000 Canadians served in the Royal Air Force; one squadron of Hurricanes was manned entirely by Canadian fighter pilots, and in the fighting near Dunkirk this squadron brought down 28 German aircraft. In the struggles that took place over London and South-Eastern England the Canadian pilots covered themselves with glory.

In the field of industry, too, Canada's effort was great, and grew ever greater. On June 18 Mr. Mackenzie King stated in the Federal House of Commons that a bill to mobilize all the human and material resources of the Dominion for the prosecution of the war would be introduced immediately. The bill became law a few days later as the National Resources Mobilization Act. The first step taken under the Act was the registration of every man and woman in Canada over 16, so as to obtain a complete record of the fitness, responsibilities and willingness to serve of every Canadian citizen.

On June 29 Mr. C. D. Howe, Canadian Minister of Munitions and Supply, announced that since the outbreak of

war orders approximating $75,000,000, as well as commitments of a further $50,000,000, had been undertaken in Canada; these orders were given in the earlier stages by the British Supply Board in Ottawa, but on July 1 the work was taken over by the Canadian Ministry of Munitions and Supply, which acted in close conjunction with a company called Allied Supplies, Ltd., whose formation was announced on July 8. The new company, Government-owned and controlled, was formed to coordinate and direct the buying of munitions and supplies on behalf of the British Government and of other joint Anglo-Canadian war projects. By June, 1940, the value of the war contracts placed by the Allies in Canada exceeded $300,000,000. Orders placed for the United Kingdom during July represented a very large increase over the whole of the orders placed during the preceding six months.

Very impressive was the survey of progress given to the House of Commons in Ottawa by Mr. Howe on July 30.

"All of us are aware," he said, "that Canada's industrial tempo is at the highest peak in our history, but even this tempo will increase rapidly as factories now under construction go into operation, and as plants now being tooled for new production begin to produce. Plants now under construction, involving some $120,000,000, will have a productive capacity of $500,000,000 (£125,000,000) a year. The shipbuilding industry employs 14,000 men on a $50,000,000 ship construction programme, mainly of corvettes, and is making progress ahead of schedule. Several of these patrol boats have already been launched."

Mr. Howe went on to describe the rapid progress which had been made in the construction of aerodromes, hangars, and other facilities for the Empire Air Training Scheme; what it had been planned should be constructed over a period of two-and-a-half years would be ready by the following November. Concerning mechanized equipment, Mr. Howe said that 600 mechanized units were produced daily in Canada, and very shortly the figure would be substantially increased; it was planned to produce 30 Mark III tanks a month. And from small beginnings Canada's aircraft industry was being developed, so that by early in 1941 the Canadian plants could produce 360 aeroplanes a month.



A LEADER OF NEW ZEALAND

The Rt. Hon. Peter Fraser had been for some time Acting Prime Minister of the Dominion Government when he succeeded to the Premiership in April, 1940. Born in Scotland, he emigrated to New Zealand in 1910.

Photo, Hay Wrightson

As in Canada and Australia, so in New Zealand: the reaction of Government and people to the Nazi triumph in Europe was an intensification of the Dominion's war effort and a mobilization of its entire resources of men and material. Mr. Peter Fraser, whose administration took office on April 30 following the death of Mr. M. J. Savage, set up on May 26 a War Council of cabinet ministers, leaders of the Opposition, representatives of employers and the trade unions, farmers, Maoris and retired soldiers, which was charged with the direction of the entire war activities of the Dominion. This was followed on July 16 by the establishment of a War Cabinet, consisting of Mr. Fraser, Mr. Nash (Minister of Finance), Mr. Jones (Defence Minister), Mr. Hamilton, and Mr. Coates, a former Prime Minister. The Emergency Regulations Act, empowering the State to control the services and property of every person, became law in the first week of June, and compulsory military service was introduced on June 17; a general reserve was established to include all males over 16, from whom a selection would be drawn by ballot of men between 21 and 45 to serve in the armed forces in New Zealand and overseas. When voluntary recruiting ceased on July 22, more than 80,000 men had enlisted; the special Maori battalion numbered more than 4,100 men by the end of the month. The first contingent of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force arrived in Egypt on February 12, and on June 20 the first landing was made in the United Kingdom. In the same month about 400 officers and men of the New Zealand Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve also arrived in Britain.

New Zealand's War Council

WHERE NEW ZEALAND PILOTS WERE TRAINED

Under the Empire Air Training Scheme pilots were trained in the Dominion of New Zealand, and this photograph shows Oxford Trainer aircraft at the Flying School, Wigram, N.Z., where many of the Royal New Zealand Air Force learnt to fly.

Photo, G.P.U.



Already the New Zealand division of the Royal Navy had done good work, its most spectacular achievement being the part played by the "Achilles" in the Battle of the River Plate in December, 1939. The division included another cruiser of the "Achilles" type, an armed merchant cruiser, mine-sweepers and armed trawlers. Then, as regards the New Zealand Air Force, 5,000 men were serving or training, and many thousands more were waiting to enrol. Some 900 New Zealand airmen had found a place in the Royal Air Force, and further large drafts of airmen from New Zealand, chiefly pilots, arrived in the United Kingdom in July for service with the R.A.F.

At the end of June the Government assumed full powers over industry and property. Manufacture of munitions in railway workshops and private engineering works was pushed ahead at full speed. The whole of the New Zealand wool clip and its butter, cheese, and meat surplus had already been bought by the United Kingdom for the period of the war and one year after; and every effort was made to stimulate the production of these vital war materials and foodstuffs. For the year ending March 31, 1940, the Dominion's war expenditure was estimated at nearly £10,000,000, and during 1940-41 it was expected that the expenditure would reach nearly £40,000,000, of which £30,000,000 was earmarked for the Army, £6,000,000 for the Air Force, and £1,500,000 for the Navy.

New Zealand's Industries Mobilized

Turning now to South Africa, this youngest of the great dominions was altogether unprepared for war in 1939, but it soon showed that it did not lack the spirit for making it. The obligation to serve in South Africa is as clearly recognized in the Union today as it was in the old republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, and there are many South African regiments composed entirely of volunteers whose history goes back for generations, and whose battle honours make a goodly show. As soon as war broke out these regiments were brought up to full strength. Recruiting was greatly stimulated by the invasion of Holland, with which South Africa has many cultural and historic ties, and soon the number of volunteers neared 150,000. With few exceptions the volunteers attested for service anywhere in Africa. In June the presence in East Africa of the first contingents of the South African Mobile Field Force was announced, and a month later the main body arrived in Kenya, the whole constituting a complete army under the command of General Dickinson; the largest and best equipped military force ever to be dispatched from the Union.

Shortly before they left for the front they were inspected by General Smuts, the Prime Minister of the Union, who on June 16 was also appointed to the command of the Union Defence Forces.

"As an old soldier," he said, "I know what your service as soldiers in the far north may mean to most of you. I express to you the gratitude of the people of South Africa for the choice you have made and the service you are prepared to offer your people and your country. More no man can do than offer his life for his friend. That offer, the highest and most solemn offer a man can make, you are making. We are proud of you. A nation is never proud of its hand-uppers, its fence-sitters, its players-for-safety. We South Africans reserve our respect and pride for bitter-enders, for those who go all out and take their life in their own hands for their country and their people. You are going north to meet the enemy where he can be found, not where he comes to find you—in your own homes. That, too, has been the tradition of South Africa. We did it in the last war."



SOUTH AFRICA'S DAILY TRIBUTE TO HER SOLDIER SONS

In many cities of the Union of South Africa there was observed a two minutes' pause at midday in remembrance of the fighting men at the war front. Here is the scene in Adderley Street, Cape Town, duringthe two minutes' silence.

Photo, Sport & General



IN CONFERENCE AT CAPE TOWN

In March, 1940, General Sir Archibald Wavell (left) flew to the Cape for consultation with General Smuts, Prime Minister and Defence Minister of the Union, in whose office he is here seen.

Photo, Wide World





SOUTH AFRICANS IN KENYA

Following Italy's entry into the war (in June, 1940) a contingent of South African troops was dispatched to guard Kenya. Right, a troop train en route; top, Sir Henry Moore, Governor of Kenya, taking the salute at a parade of South African troops. On his right is Maj.-Gen. D. P. Dickinson, commanding the East African Forces; on his left stands Col. D. H. Pienaar, a Brigade Commander of the S.A. Contingent.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; S.U. Blackheard

Arrived in Kenya, the new Springboks were welcomed by the Governor, Sir Henry Moore. "Your presence here," he said, "fighting side by side with units raised in the Rhodesias and in both East and West Africa [the Gold Coast Regiment and the King's African Rifles], is a striking proof of the determination of all members of the British Commonwealth in Africa to present a united front against the King's enemies."

At sea the Union assumed the responsibility for the defence of Simonstown, our naval station in South Africa, and the Seaward Defence Force engaged in minesweeping and patrolling, anti-submarine work, and the control of shipping entering Union ports. In May the South African minesweepers successfully swept a minefield which had been discovered off Cape Agulhas.

Quite as important was the work of the South African Air Force, founded by South Africans who had served with the old R.F.C. and the R.A.F. in the Great War. Units of the S.A.A.F. accompanied the Field Force to Kenya, and were soon in action above the battlefields of East Africa; all through the campaign against the Italians, indeed, its 'planes were in almost continuous action against the enemy, doing great damage to the enemy bases and lines of communication. As South Africa had been engaged in the advanced training of pilots for several years before the war, the Union decided not to participate in the Empire Air Training Scheme in Canada; but it intensified its own training and, furthermore, offered facilities to the British Government to train British pilots for the R.A.F. in South Africa. The offer was gladly accepted, and a British Air Mission, under Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, proceeded to South Africa to put the scheme into operation. Flying schools were established, and numbers of pilots were "turned out." In addition to their part in the war in East Africa, bomber reconnaissance squadrons of the South African Air Force kept up a daily patrol of the Union's 2,000 miles of coastline.

Adjoining South Africa to the north is Southern Rhodesia. Here compulsory military training for all European males between 18 and 55 was introduced on May 20, 1940, and the first group of men aged 18-25 were called up for military training soon afterwards, and the age group 25-40 in June. In the same month it was announced that a native unit, the Rhodesian African Rifles, was about to be raised. Rhodesian soldiers were posted to various British forces in Africa, the United Kingdom, and the Middle East, and the first contingent of Rhodesian troops reached Egypt on April 30. Then three Southern Rhodesian squadrons of the R.A.F. were raised. Some of the trainees proceeded to the United Kingdom, but the first Southern Rhodesian squadron was stationed in Kenya, and soon did valuable work in reconnaissance and bombing flights over Italian Africa. At the same time a scheme for training pilots was instituted in the colony for the training of pupils from the United Kingdom and other parts of the Empire. Equipment was drawn from the United Kingdom, which also supplied the planes via the Cape. Then, like the

Southern Rhodesia



What Canada and Australia, South Africa and New Zealand have done on the grand scale, every colony and dependency, territory and scattered island have done to their utmost ability. Men and money and material have been granted generously. By midsummer of 1940 compulsory military service existed in most of the colonies, in the Solomon Islands and in Fiji, the Falklands and Ceylon, Hong Kong and Malaya, Uganda and Nyasaland, and Northern Rhodesia, and soon it was introduced in the colonies of British West Africa and in Tanganyika. Palestine was placed on a war footing on June 23, when the High Commissioner was empowered to mobilize its entire resources in man power and property; and an Order in Council was issued in Kenya, placing all persons and property at the disposal of His Majesty. Then, as for money, from every corner of the Empire came interest-free loans and, more often still, free gifts for the Imperial war chest. Most of the great

RHODESIA'S SURGEON PREMIER

Before going to Rhodesia in 1911 the Rt. Hon. G. M. Huggins had held appointments in London hospitals. He first became Premier of S. Rhodesia in 1933. Right, an armoured car of the Rhodesian Reconnaissance Unit.

Photos, Lafayette, and courtesy of Southern Rhodesian Government



great Union to the south, Rhodesia set about the supplying of vast quantities of raw materials and foodstuffs to Britain. In 1940–41, it was stated that the colony's war effort would require an expenditure of £3,000,000—an effort which to be appreciated must be compared with a total ordinary expenditure in peacetime of under £5,000,000.



MACHINE-GUNS AMID MALAYAN PINEAPPLES

In the Malay Peninsula prompt measures were taken to safeguard Singapore, key-point of the Straits; besides Imperial troops native forces were embodied, and this photograph shows men of the Johore Military Force at manoeuvres.

Photo, P.N.A.

newspapers of the Empire instituted Spitfire and Hurricane funds, so that their readers would have the proud consciousness of having contributed something to the victory in British skies. Finally, as to resources in those months of hard and bitter warfare, the various units of the Empire approached more closely than ever before, sharing their surpluses, exchanging their products, developing those great and unrivalled resources with which Nature has blessed their territories.

Perhaps we may close with a few words from a speech broadcast by Mr. G. M. Huggins, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, on June 24. "Southern Rhodesia," said Mr. Huggins—and for Southern Rhodesia we might put any other member of the British family of nations—"stands four square with Britain in her determination to bring the war to a successful conclusion. She stands with her and with the rest of the Empire, up to the last shilling and the last man, until the monstrous system that is trying to dominate the world is destroyed."

Diary of the War

AUGUST, 1940

August 1, 1940. Two enemy aircraft destroyed in North Sea by steamer "Highlander" and one by H.M.S. "Weston." R.A.F. bomb aerodromes at Dortmund, Leeuwarden and Haamstede, Krupp's works at Essen, other targets in N.W. Germany, and aerodrome at Cherbourg. Many targets in Libya and Eritrea attacked. Two raiders shot down in Channel.

August 2. Day raids on enemy aerodromes; night attacks on oil depots. Lord Beaverbrook joins War Cabinet. Fleet Air Arm bomb aerodrome at Cagliari.

August 3. R.A.F. raid Kiel naval base, enemy aerodromes and oil plants. Enemy bombers attacking ship in Berbera harbour damaged by our fighters. Three raids on Derna (Libya).

August 4. Italians invade British Somaliland at three points. Fierce air fighting in Libya. R.A.F. make night raids on enemy aerodromes and oil plants.

August 5. H. M. trawler "Marsona" reported sunk. Night raids on targets in N.W. Germany. Italians occupy Hargeisa and Zeila, Brit. Somaliland. Four raiders shot down near S.E. coast.

August 6. Announced that small mobile British force has completely dominated Eastern Libya. Italians capture Oadweina, Brit. Somaliland. H.M. trawlers "Drummer" and "Oswaldian" reported sunk.

August 7. Day raids on aerodromes at Cherbourg and Haamstede. Night attacks on Homburg oil plant, Kiel dockyard, store depots at Hamm, and many aerodromes. Night raiders over Britain, but damage slight. R.A.F. bomb shipping at Bardia and submarine base at Massawa.

August 8. Convoy in Channel attacked before dawn by E-boats, which sink three vessels. Waves of dive-bombers sink two more. In subsequent air battle 61 raiders are shot down for loss of 18 British. One E-boat sunk, another damaged. Submarine "Oswald" and liner "Kemmendine" reported lost. Enemy advancing northwards from Hargeisa and Oadweina. Aircraft of Fleet Air Arm make dive-bombing attacks on Italian H.Q. at Zeila. Big air battle over Sidi-Azeiz, Libya; 15 Italian fighters destroyed. Day and night raids on targets in Holland and N.W. Germany.

August 9. R.A.F. bomb seaplane base near Brest, oil tanks at Flushing, works at Cologne and aerodrome in Guernsey. Italian positions on Hargeisa-Jugargan road attacked. R.A.F. raid Tobruk and Massawa.

August 10. Submarine "Odin" reported lost. Italian advance in Somaliland continues. Day attacks on enemy aerodromes and night raids on Hamburg.

August 11. Massed German attack on balloon barrage, Portland, Weymouth, and East Coast shipping; 65 raiders destroyed, 26 British fighters missing. Day raids on enemy aerodromes and night attacks on oil plants and other targets. In Somaliland British repulse attack near Jugargan Pass.

August 12. Large-scale raids on South Coast, including Isle of Wight and Portsmouth. Sixty-two enemy machines destroyed for 13 British. R.A.F. bomb Gotha airframe factory and other targets, including 17 aerodromes.

August 13. Running fights between British m.t.b.s and German light naval forces; one Nazi ship rammed. R.A.F. carry out day operations from Jutland to Bay of Biscay. At night large force bombs Caproni aircraft works at Milan and Fiat plant at Turin. Others raid Junkers factories at Dessau, military targets in the Ruhr and 14 aerodromes. All-day air battle along South Coast, including mass attack on Southampton. Enemy lose 78 aircraft, Britain 13.

August 14. Following violent Italian attacks in Somaliland, British withdraw. Destroyers "Malcolm" and "Verity" engage six Nazi armed trawlers and three E-boats, sinking three vessels. Cruiser "Transylvania" reported sunk by U-boat. R.A.F. attack oil refineries and aerodromes. Thirty-one raiders destroyed.

August 15. Enemy air onslaught from Tyne to Plymouth; 180 destroyed by R.A.F. and A.A. defences. British lost 34 'planes. R.A.F. bomb targets at Milan, Turin and Genoa. More attacks on oil plants and aerodromes.

August 16. Intense air attacks on S.E. areas, including two on London. Enemy lose 75 aircraft, Britain 22. R.A.F. make night raids on Central Germany. Tobruk harbour bombed.

August 17. Submarine "Orpheus" presumed lost. Heavy R.A.F. raid on Boulogne. British capture Fort Capuzzo, Libya. In Somaliland they withdraw towards Berbera.

August 18. Mass raids on S.E. areas. Enemy lose 152 aircraft, Britain 22. R.A.F. bomb factories at Milan and Turin, works at Bad Rheinfelden and Waldshut, aerodromes at Freiburg and Habsheim and Boulogne harbour.

August 19. Fleet Air Arm torpedo transport off Norway. War Office announces British Somaliland has been evacuated. R.A.F. attack targets in Holland and N.W. Germany, including 30 aerodromes. Oil tanks near Bordeaux bombed. Five raiders destroyed.

August 20. Daylight raids on enemy aerodromes. Coastal Command aircraft attack two German destroyers in North Sea, damaging one. Enemy lose nine aircraft over Britain.

August 21. Germans lose 13 aircraft in short raids on Britain. R.A.F. attack enemy aerodromes, oil refineries and railway centres. Rumania cedes Southern Dobruja to Bulgaria.

August 22. Convoy in Straits attacked from air and by German shore guns, but no ship hit. R.A.F. heavily attack gun positions on French coast. Night raids on Frankfurt, Cologne, and 22 aerodromes. R.A.F. sink two submarines, destroyer, and submarine depot ship at Bomba, Libya. Ten raiders shot down over Britain.

August 23. British ship "Havildar" and the Canadian freighter "Geraldine Mary" sunk off Irish coast. R.A.F. bomb gun emplacements near Gris Nez. Night attacks on seaplane bases, aerodromes and railway sidings. Fort Capuzzo again in Italian hands. Widespread raids over Britain.

August 24. Mass attacks on Britain resumed. Dover shelled. Fierce air battle above Straits. Germany loses 52 raiders, Britain 19. Navy enters Bardia harbour and engages targets at close range. R.A.F. bomb Daimler Benz plant at Stuttgart, nitrogen plant at Ludwigshaven, oil plant at Frankfurt, and industrial targets in N.W. Italy.

August 25. Germany loses 55 'planes in mass attacks on Britain, 43 being destroyed off Portland. London again raided at night. R.A.F. bomb armament works in Berlin area and many aerodromes. Coastal Command attack flying-boats in Tromso area, sinking two.

August 26. Destroyer "Hostile" reported sunk. Three main mass air attacks on Britain; great battle over Thames Estuary, others over Dover, Folkestone, and Straits. Night attack on two Midland towns. First enemy raid on Eire. Germany loses 47 'planes, Britain 15. R.A.F. attack 27 aerodromes, oil plants and depots and many other targets in Germany; factories at Milan and Turin; objectives in East and North Africa. Chad Territory joins Allies.

August 27. Submarine "Spearfish" presumed lost. R.A.F. bomb docks at Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, oil tanks and depots in Germany and France, factories in North Italy. Widespread night attacks over Britain.

August 28. Heavy air attacks over Kent coast and Thames Estuary. Night raid on London. Enemy lose 29 aircraft, Britain 14. R.A.F. make destructive raid on targets in Berlin, Leipzig, etc.

August 29. Two main raids on Kent-Sussex coast. Widespread attacks at night. Enemy lose 11 aircraft, Britain 12. R.A.F. bomb Dutch aerodromes and coastal shipping. Night attacks on Essen, oil plants, goods yards and aerodromes. S.A.A.F. destroy hundreds of motor vehicles at Mogadishu, It. Somaliland. French Congo and Cameroons join Allies.

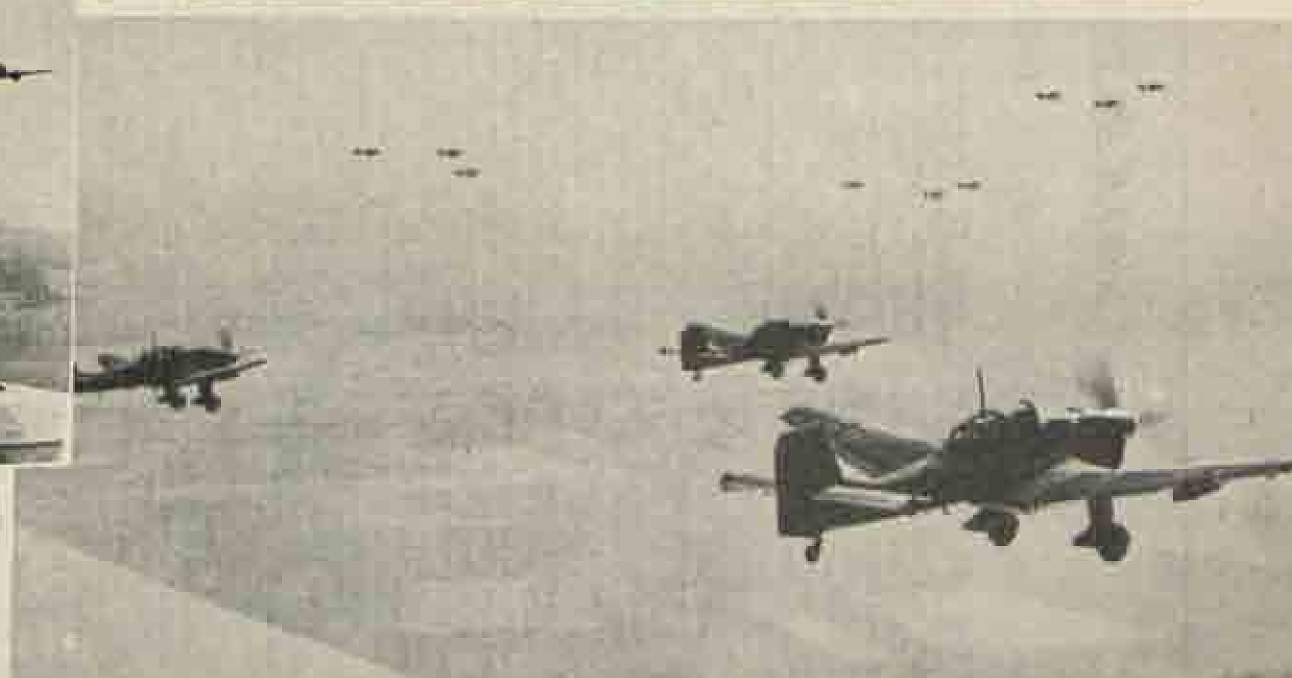
August 30. Evacuee ship taking 320 children to Canada torpedoed in Atlantic; one casualty. Great air battles over London area all day and night. Enemy loses 62 aircraft, Britain 27. Heavy night raid on Berlin, and other targets in Germany and France. Rumania cedes Northern Transylvania and three Szekle provinces to Hungary.

August 31. Enemy renew attacks against S.E. aerodromes. Fierce fight over London. Night attacks over N.E. town and N.W. coastal district. Germany loses 89 aircraft, Britain 39. R.A.F. bomb targets in Berlin, Cologne, Hanover, Emden and elsewhere. Italian air bases in Libya attacked. Merchant cruiser "Dunvegan Castle" reported sunk.











Photos, Keystone; L.N.A.

RAIDS ON BRITAIN SEEN THROUGH NAZI EYES

1, General Ritter von Greim with Luftwaffe officers picking out objectives in Britain; 2, Final instructions being given to air crews; 3, Fighter machines seen from the tail of the Heinkel bomber which they are escorting; 4, Flight of Junkers dive-bombers setting out on a short-range raid on coastal targets; 5, Emergency landing-place on the French coastal belt, indicated by a swastika made of white cloth.

BATTLE OF BRITAIN, PHASE II: THE ATTEMPT TO IMMOBILIZE THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

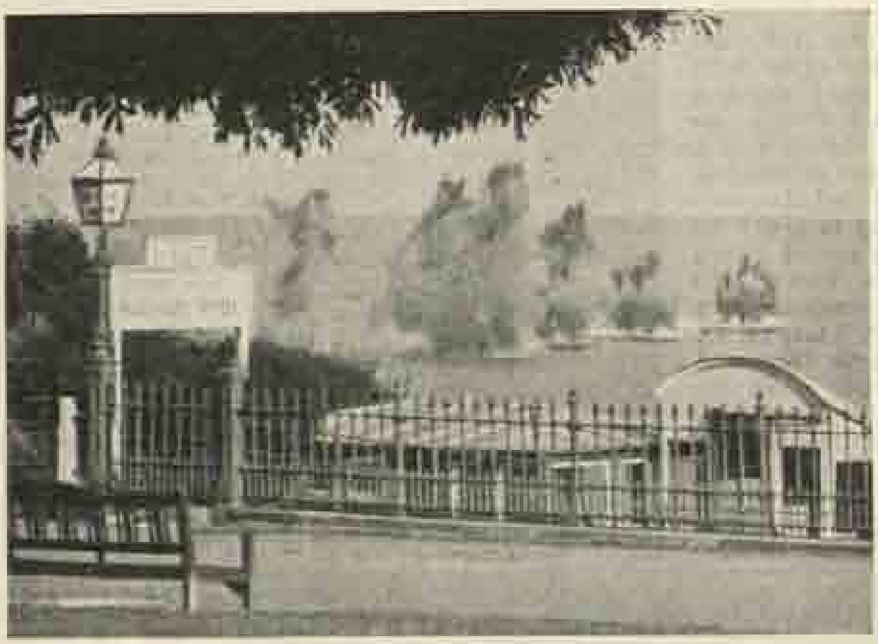
A Feint Attack—Raids on Channel Ports Continue—Varying Nazi Tactics Countered by R.A.F.—Big Part Played by the A.A. Gunners—The Switch to Our Aerodromes: 800 Nazi Aircraft Against Our Fighter Command—Magnificent Heroism of Ground Personnel—The Onslaught Fails—Results of Individual Battles: The Score—Night Raids and Interception—Air Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding

A BRIEF pause succeeded the first phase of the Battle of Britain. It was used by the Germans to gather together their forces, to repair their damaged aircraft, and to assemble fresh supplies at their advanced bases. The object of the second phase became perfectly clear almost from the start. It was to immobilize the Royal Air Force.

The German General Staff had recognized a fault in their earlier planning and had realized that the attempt to destroy our ports and coastal shipping could not work while the Royal Air Force remained in being. Yet the invasion plan, which must be assumed to have existed and to have been the basis of the air operations against Britain, demanded that coastal shipping and ports should be destroyed so as to provide what would in effect have been a neutral fringe round the islands of Britain. This would have provided a clear way for the passage of German troops to selected points on the coast. They would not have been subjected to harassing by the small coastal vessels and they would have met little resistance in the ports themselves.

That seems to have been the idea. But when it was seen that coastal shipping was still working and that the ports were not shut down, the German High Command recognized that the R.A.F. barred the way to accomplishment of this essential preliminary.

Phase Two, therefore, was a complete switch of the offensive from ports and shipping to aerodromes and the R.A.F. itself. The Germans had learned in Poland that it was possible by vigorous dive-bombing attack, maintained at a sufficient intensity, to shut down an aerodrome. If the aircraft could be caught on the ground large numbers could be destroyed in this way, the landing surface could be so pitted with craters that it became difficult to operate aircraft with any efficiency, and sheds and buildings could be destroyed so that there was no place for maintenance work or for the staffs and pilots to live in. The Polish pattern, therefore, determined the second phase of the Battle of Britain. The order to the Luftwaffe was to shut down the Royal Air Force, and to do so mainly by destroying its aerodromes.



ATTACKS ON THE PORTS CONTINUED

Whether it was, as suggested in this chapter, a feint or a mere continuation of a settled plan, attacks on the S.E., such as this by dive-bombers at Folkestone on August 26, 1940, were a feature of the earlier part of the second phase of the Battle of Britain.

Photo, 'Daily Mirror'

Let us now turn to the actual circumstances of the attack, which may be said to have begun on August 24 with what can be looked on as a partial feint effort, to have become clarified as directed at the Royal Air Force on August 30, and then to have continued until September 5. Tactically the second phase differed from the first chiefly in the changed formations used by the enemy. Much heavier fighter escorts were employed, and the Germans showed a great deal of ingenuity in disposing their formations with the object always of opposing our fighters by their own and thereby permitting their bombers to get through and attack their objective.

Before considering the details of these operations it is worth noticing that the second phase not only represented a switch from ports and coastal shipping to aerodromes, but also an advance, if one may speak of such a thing in air war. The Germans did undoubtedly move forward the air frontier during the second phase so that their attacks were falling on points farther inland. In a sense, therefore, the second phase appeared rather more critical than the first phase. If the Luftwaffe gained much success in damaging or in shutting down our aerodromes, even temporarily, it could claim to have made an advance and to have taken an important step towards preparing the way for invasion by sea.

The first part of the second phase (August 24–30) took the form of a renewal of the attacks on ports, though this time without concurrent attacks on convoys. Places like Dover, Portsmouth, and Southampton were made the objective of strong bombing forces. Residential districts in Kent, the Thames Estuary, and Essex were also



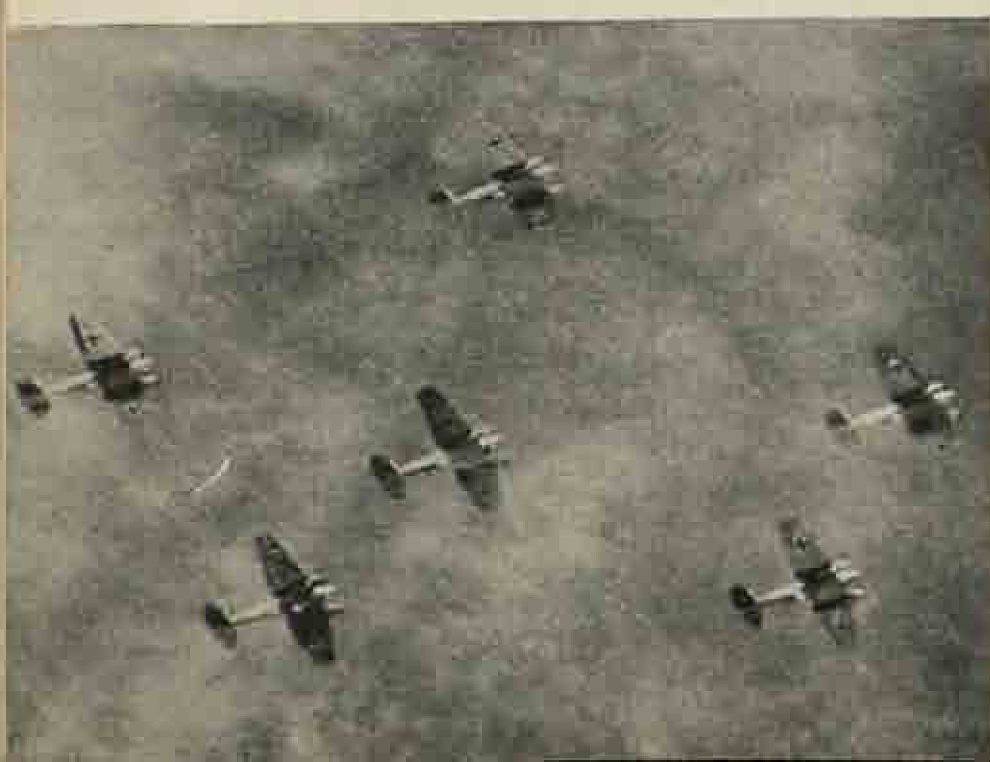
PROTECTING THE TAIL

A device to protect fighters from the rear, seen in the August operations: two fighters flying in S bends on either flank of a formation.



attacked; though whether these were specifically selected targets or whether the enemy formations turned to them when they found themselves so harassed and so damaged that they had difficulty in penetrating to their real objectives, is not yet known.

Altogether there were thirty-five major attacks in this phase of the Battle of Britain, and on many occasions more than one hundred German machines were in use at the same time. When such large numbers of machines were employed a great deal of cunning was displayed in trying to divert the attention of the duty control officers in the operations rooms. These officers direct the defending squadrons as a result of information which they receive from the Royal Observer Corps and other sources, and which is set out by means of symbols on a large table map. Sometimes the Germans sent in a heavy force all in formation with escorting fighters and lower-flying bombers. This formation would sometimes cross the coast and remain together until they were embroiled in battle with our defending squadrons. Then smaller groups of bombers would detach themselves from the main formation and try to dart in and attack some target before appropriate defending forces could be reassembled.



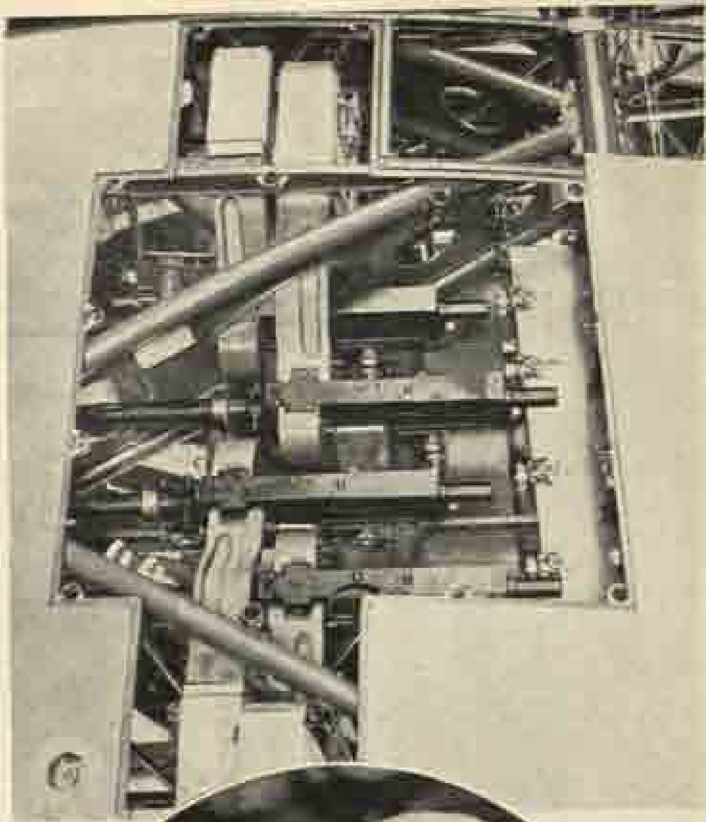
NAZI BOMBERS IN FORMATION

On September 3 about 120 Dornier bombers flying high attacked the East Coast in formations with Messerschmitt escorts higher still above. Here are some of the Dorniers seen by a photographer on the ground. Left, twin-engined Heinkel 111s flying home through scattered cloud. On this day 25 of the enemy 'planes were shot down; on September 2, 66; on the 4th, 57.

Photos, "Daily Mirror"; Associated Press

Once or twice success attended this kind of trick, but the duty control officers were not often deceived, and the information which came into the operations rooms was usually sufficiently complete for them to watch upon their maps every move of the German







TEETH OF SPITFIRE AND HURRICANE

Both types of R.A.F. fighters which gave so good an account of themselves in August and September, 1940, had eight Browning ·303 machine-guns firing a total of 160 rounds a second, greatly exceeding the Nazi fighters in capacity. Above, left, recharging magazines of a Hurricane just returned from combat and, right, the layout of four of its guns inside a wing. Centre, the button on the joystick of a Spitfire that fires the guns. Below, a Spitfire on an aerodrome looses off a broadside.

Photos, Charles E. Brown; "Flight"; Associated Press; G.P.U.





THE DIVE-BOMBER'S FEAR

The balloon barrage had, after a year's existence, become considerably enlarged and in many ways showed its value in the Battle of Britain by land and by sea. This balloon, as an urban setting, is having a last-moment repair before it goes aloft. They were frequent targets (see page 1137).
Photo, "Daily Mirror"

machines and to be ready to dispose the R.A.F. fighters so that no German formation went far without being attacked. On the few occasions, however, when the German stratagem did succeed, certain of our aircraft factories were damaged.

The responsibility for coping with German machines which came well inland rested mainly with our fighters, but in the attacks on places like Portsmouth and Southampton the anti-aircraft guns also bore a big part in the total defence effort. Often they were successful in forcing the enemy formations to jettison their bombs into the sea: this happened, for example, on August 25, when the main attack was completely foiled, largely owing to the weight and accuracy of the A.A. fire, which seemed in this case to have a sharply deterrent effect on the German bombers.

The first day, then, produced raids on Portland, Dover, and Manston, and the next day, August 25, on Portsmouth, Southampton, Dover, Folkestone, and the Thames Estuary. Attacks at these and similar points were repeated until August 30, when the whole weight was thrown against the inland fighter aerodromes. Eight hundred aircraft were used in what was evidently intended to be a decisive stroke against the R.A.F. Fighter Command. Kenley, North Weald, Hornchurch, Debden (which is north of London), Lympne, Detling, Duxford, Northolt and Biggin Hill were all attacked. Extremely heavy raids were launched on the aerodromes at Manston and Detling, so that the general picture shows a dead set at the fighter defences in the south-east corner of England.

At these R.A.F. aerodromes heroic feats were performed by the ground staffs and maintenance workers. In the face of dive-bombing raids by aircraft which had managed to get through to their objectives, or had in some way eluded our fighters, the ground personnel remained incessantly on duty and continued to refuel and to maintain the machines, so that at no time were our aerodromes put out of action for more than a very brief period during an actual raid.

This determination to hold to our aerodromes and to see that they continued to work without intermission was one of the chief causes of our success in this stage of the battle. Had one single aerodrome been shut down the effect might have been serious, for directly a start is made in the immobilization of fighter bases the following steps become successively easier, and there would have been a very real risk of other fighter stations being shut down, with consequent weakening of our defences, perhaps up to the danger point.

After the tribute to the ground staffs comes the tribute to the aircraft. Again the Spitfires and Hurricanes proved their technical superiority to anything the enemy could send over. For many raids the enemy could employ his short-range fighters, since his bases in France were sufficiently near to allow them to operate over England and yet have a sufficient margin of fuel for the return journey. But the Spitfires and Hurricanes proved capable of dealing with the Messerschmitt 109 single-engined fighters and also with the twin-engined Messerschmitt 110s. The German bombers were completely unable to offer a strong defence against our fighter attacks.

Splendid Fighter Aircraft

Some brilliant individual combats were fought, and the general planning of the operations and the manner in which our fighter formations worked

A.R.P. WORK IN A LONDON SUBURB

During the heavy August attacks London was raided, although it was incidental to the main Nazi plan. On August 24 the first bombs fell on Central London. The A.R.P. services then came fully into action, and here a repair squad is dealing with the destruction caused to workers' houses during that raid.



proved extremely successful. Our fighters frequently used the formation of a squadron in flights in line astern, with two tail-end protectors flying in S bends over the rear part of the formation to protect it against surprise from behind. Modern single-seat fighters are not well adapted for keeping a good watch towards the rear: the pilots are enclosed in their cabins, and the transparent panels over their heads are apt to make full observation difficult in any direction, but especially so towards the rear. These formations were therefore devised to give the aircraft the ability to move rapidly into battle and to reduce to a minimum the risk of surprise attack from behind.

The enemy formations were occasionally of the box type, the object being seemingly to enclose the bombers within groups of fighter escorts so as to protect them against attack coming from any direction.

We may now turn to the results of the individual battles. In what has been called the feint period, which began on August 25 and continued until the 31st, 266 German aircraft were shot down by the R.A.F. and 35 by anti-aircraft guns. The figures had been high, though not quite so high as at some periods of the first phase. August 31, with its total of 88 shot down (73 by the R.A.F. and the remainder by A.A. guns), was the most successful day. Our own losses during the whole of the second phase were, according to the official statement, 219 aircraft and the pilots of 132 of these were saved.

The Feint Attack

August 31 was our heaviest day also, when we lost 37 machines and saved 26 of their pilots.

The subsequent attacks on aerodromes did not produce quite such heavy losses. Indeed, the losses on both sides tended to fall, though the task of our fighters was in some way intensified, for they were subjected to attack on the ground and had to face in the air steadily increasing enemy fighter escorts. September 1 saw an enemy loss of 29 aircraft, all shot down by our fighters, while we lost 15 fighters. The highest enemy casualties in this period of attacks on aerodromes were on September 2, when the Germans lost 66 machines, 43 being shot down by the R.A.F. The daily figures for September are given in a later chapter.

Let us now see the effect of the German raids. As mentioned earlier, they destroyed buildings at some of our aerodromes and did a certain amount of damage to other Government property. They also made a few hits on aircraft factories, though they did not seriously interrupt production. They used bombs of widely different calibre. The dive-bombers of the Junkers 87 type dropped 500-lb. bombs in most of their attacks, though they sometimes used others of about half this weight and, more rarely, bombs of 1,000 lb. A few cases were recorded of still heavier bombs being dropped, probably by the Heinkel 111 machines. But there were no authenticated instances during this period of the use of the heaviest types, such as were employed later when the attack on London developed its full intensity.



MILTON LIES LOW

The second daylight raid on London, August 25, damaged the Church of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, and blew the statue of Milton (who was buried in the church) off its pedestal.

Photo, Wide World

Besides the active defences, some progress was made during this period with passive defence. The protection of important targets was studied in the light of experience, and such devices as blast walls were installed to reduce the damage done if hits near a particular building should be obtained. The policy of dispersal was also adopted and steps taken to implement it.

'LONDON IS BURNING'

Forerunner of far greater and more destructive fires, that caused by the first night bombs on London just before midnight on August 24 produced spectacular effects. Sharply black against the 150-foot flames stand the figure of Justice and the Old Bailey dome in this photograph. It was taken during the first serious test of London's fire-fighting organization, which had this particular fire under control in one hour.

Photo, Sport & General



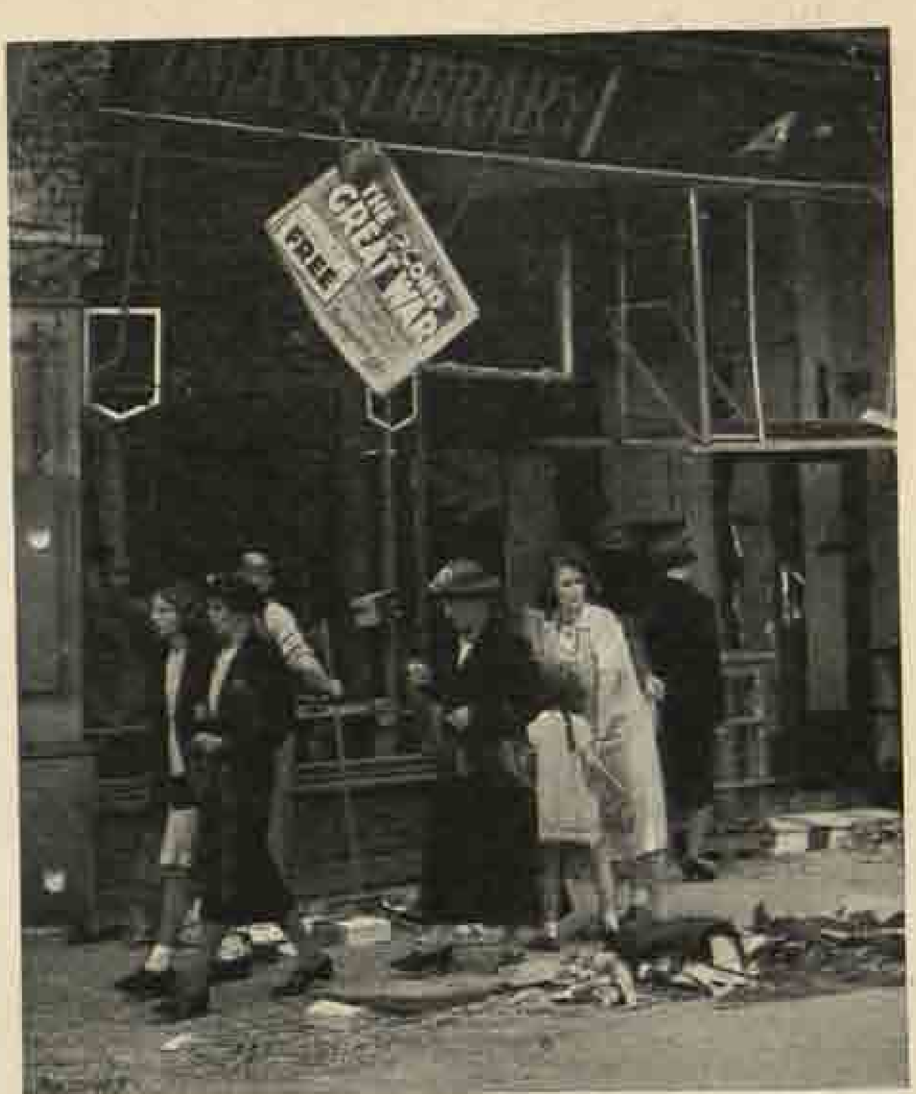
Night raiding was not at this time as intensive as it became later, but a beginning had been made by the enemy and a certain number of raids had been launched on objectives in the south-east of England by night. On the night of August 24-25 bombs fell on Central London; a big fire was started in a block of warehouses, but was localized by the regular and auxiliary Fire Services working in conjunction. Incendiary and high-explosive bombs were employed, and the enemy began also to use delayed-action bombs, which had a nuisance value until the Bomb Disposal Squads of Royal Engineers tackled this problem. The beginning of the fiercer night attacks, however, comes into the third phase of the Battle of Britain.

Night interception had not at this period had a chance of full development, because of the relatively few numbers of machines which the enemy was sending over after dusk, but it is worth mentioning that even at this period our night fighters were occasionally achieving success. In June they had brought down 20 machines; in July, 4; in August, 11; and in September, 28. The night successes mounted rapidly from the end of August towards the end of September.

Our Night Fighters

Up to the end of the second phase on September 5, and including the whole period from August 8, the Fighter Command of the R.A.F. had flown 4,523 patrols in daylight, an average of 156 a day. The pilots and ground crews had been subjected to a heavy strain, but it was quite incorrect to say, as was said by one observer from a neutral country, that the Fighter Command was near the end of its tether. It would still have been able to deploy greater forces and to work at a greater pitch of intensity had the call come, and therefore it was ready when the third phase opened to offer an ever stiffer resistance to the enemy.

A particular point to note is that British fighter pilots never hesitated to tackle stronger forces. They were nearly all the time engaged with stronger forces, and it did not in the least lessen the vigour of their attacks. In fact, one view was that some of the German formations were so large as





LONDON DAYLIGHT RAIDS

The suburbs had their first bombs over a week before Central London. Above, shops blown in at Malden, Surrey, on the morning of August 15 (the hanging placard is of peculiar interest). Special care for the welfare of animals was taken during raids. Left, horses sheltering at Covent Garden on August 30.

Photos, Topical Press; Planet News



GUNS THAT SHOT DOWN THE NAZI BOMBERS

This remarkable photograph of a 3.7-in. A.A. gun was taken at the moment of firing, for the gunner still has his hand on the lanyard. On August 15, 1940, Britain's A.A. gunners shot down 23 enemy machines; on the last day of the month they accounted for 21—sixteen within an hour and a half at the close of the day.

Photo, Fox



LONDON CARRIED ON DESPITE THE RAIDS

Testimony to London's alertness and aplomb is this photograph of an aircraft spotter scanning the skies during a raid warning on September 5, 1940. By such vigilance people in factories, shops, offices and warehouses were enabled to continue with their tasks; only if the warning whistle sounded did they go to shelter. In the background is the majestic dome of St. Paul's, as yet unscathed.

Photo, Wide World



WHILE AN AIR COMBAT RAGED ABOVE THEIR HEADS

In the early days of September, 1940, titanic battles took place in the air above South-eastern England, as the Luftwaffe tried to destroy the fighter aerodromes of the Royal Air Force. This photograph, taken in the Kentish hopfields on September 3, shows children taking cover while R.A.F. fighters engage Nazi raiders overhead. Their elders disdained to shelter and went on with their work of hop-picking, and even the children were loath to resort to the trenches.

Photo, John Topham



LONDON CITY UNDERGOES ITS BAPTISM OF FIRE

On the night of August 24-25, 1940, bombs fell for the first time on Central London and many warehouse buildings in the eastern part of the City were destroyed or damaged. This photo of one of the conflagrations was obtained at great risk while high explosive bombs were raining down on targets lit up by incendiaries dropped by previous raiders. The raid provided a full-scale test for London's fire-fighters, who localized the outbreaks and prevented more extensive destruction.

Photo, I.N.A.

to be unwieldy, a circumstance that enabled our quickly-moving fighter formations to dart in and out and do a good deal of execution before the enemy could readjust himself to meet the rapidly changing conditions.

The second phase of the Battle of Britain signalized the growing realization by the German High Command of the real strength and efficiency of the R.A.F. The very fact that the attack was directed against the fighter stations was an indication of the German appreciation that they could not work their will on London or any other parts of Britain in the way they had worked it upon Warsaw and Rotterdam unless they could first destroy our fighter resistance. Their failure to do this was clear by September 5, but in the German manner they were not deterred from further efforts and further losses; and, as will be seen when the third phase is considered, they contrived to make an effort on an even larger scale to break through the screen offered by our Fighter Command.

Where the Luftwaffe Failed

Finally, something must be said here to acknowledge the work of Air Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief the Fighter Command at this period. He was largely responsible for the organization of the systems of reporting and control used in the direction of all these operations. These systems had been built up during a period of years before the outbreak of war, while Sir Hugh was Commander-in-Chief, and had been perfected in many Air Force exercises.

Sir Hugh had a good deal to do with the tactical success of the fighter squadrons, for to this subject also he had devoted much of his attention. He encouraged his subordinate commanders to do everything in their power to develop and improve tactical methods. Few people have appreciated what a wide gulf lies between the fighting methods of the Royal Air Force during the Battle of Britain and those of the early pilots of the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service in 1914-18. The earlier pilots relied for their information of the enemy's movements largely upon their own eyesight. They had to go out and look for the enemy by searching the sky. Inter-communication was virtually unknown. If the leader of a formation wished to indicate that he was about to attack he could give a primitive signal by moving his machine in a certain way, but he could not speak to his pilots, nor could he give detailed directions as to the form of attack they were to employ.



The Messerschmitt 109 as used in the summer of 1940 was a single-seat, single-engined fighter with a top speed of just over 350 m.p.h. A low-wing all-metal monoplane, it was armed with a cannon and two machine-guns.



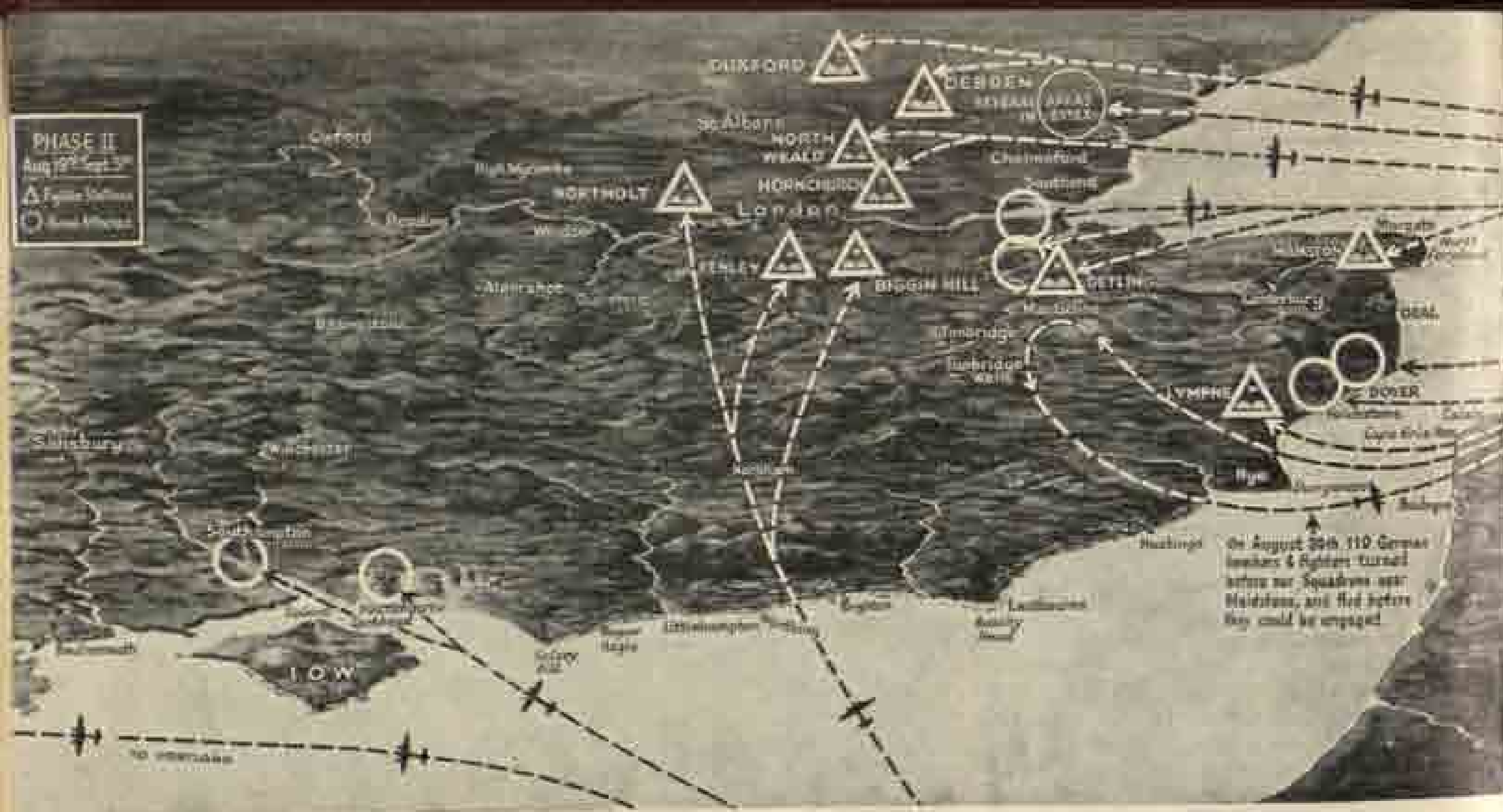
Though larger and more powerful than the Me 109, the two-seat Messerschmitt 110 was not so manoeuvrable. Its top speed was 365 m.p.h. (two engines); it was armed with two cannon and four machine-guns.



NAZI FIGHTER AIRCRAFT IN THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

A few Heinkel 113 fighters were used against the R.A.F. in the period under review. The armament was one cannon and two large-bore machine-guns; the single engine gave a top speed of about 380 m.p.h. All three Nazi fighters were outclassed by the British Hurricane and Spitfire, aided sometimes by the Defiant.

Photos, Associated Press; E.N.A.



PHASE II: LUFTWAFFE'S FUTILE ATTACK ON AERODROMES

After a five days' lull (see map, page 1164) the Nazi raiders struck (August 19) with mighty force against the inland fighter air bases of the R.A.F., though still for a time maintaining attacks on coastal targets. As many as 800 enemy aircraft were employed in the major operations on the last two days of August, 1940.

From the Ministry of Information record, "The Battle of Britain."

In the Battle of Britain the pilots in the Spitfires and Hurricanes were in communication with the ground duty controllers all the time, and were also in contact with one another. They could be led towards enemy machines by directions received by radio and sent out from the operations rooms, and when they went into combat they could receive instructions given them personally and immediately by their formation leaders. Obviously this vastly improved inter-communication enables far more complex tactical methods to be used, and the Royal Air Force have a large number of different forms of attack which they employ in accordance with the orders given them by the formation leader as they go into battle.



TESTIMONY TO SOUND WORK AND SKILFUL PILOTING

An enemy shot, entering this Hurricane from the side, pushed away the armour behind the pilot's seat. After shooting down an Me 109 the pilot was badly wounded; the engine had stopped, and the rudder and tailplane were stripped. Gliding some 20 miles, he eventually made a safe landing.

Photo, Associated Press

It is impossible to emphasize too much the gain in efficiency by this system as compared with that in which the squadron works on its own. Not only is there the advantage of close cooperation, but the whole process of interception is much more speedy. It may be that the ease with which the Luftwaffe overcame the Polish Air Force was due in some measure to the absence in that country of a fully developed organization for reporting the movements of enemy aircraft and for bringing defending fighters into contact with them.

British Fighter Organization

In the second phase of the Battle of Britain we see the justification not only of British aircraft and engine designs—the whole of the defensive fighting by the R.A.F. was conducted with a single type of engine, the Rolls-Royce Merlin—but also of the complex system of working which had been evolved as the result of very great labours on the part of those responsible. It was the system as much as the technical quality of our aircraft that enabled so few defending fighters to take such a tremendous toll of the enemy and utterly frustrate his schemes.

Chapter 115

BATTLE OF BRITAIN, PHASE III: NIGHT ATTACKS ON LONDON DEVELOP

First Night Attack on London—500 Raiders on the Docks, September 7—Goering's 'Historic Hour' Boast—Magnificent Work of Civil Defence—America's Tribute—Stories from Dockland and the West End—The George Cross Created—London's New Barrage—'The Greatest Day,' September 15—Luftwaffe's Terrible Losses

September had come—a September of splendidly sunny days, of night skies filled with stars; and Hitler and his henchman Goering, in their prideful wickedness, decided to do to London what they had done to Warsaw and, still more, to Rotterdam. Maybe they believed that by now the fighter aerodromes along the coast and about the capital had been so damaged by the August raids that they were practically out of action; or possibly their time-table decreed that it was the hour to attack London. Be that as it may, it was now London's turn, and on London the Luftwaffe was now flung in all its devilish strength.

During that first week of September there were many attempts to reach the capital, but they were ineffective before the intense A.A. fire and fighter activity. The capital was actually bombed on the night of September 4 (the first bombs in daylight on Central London having been dropped on August 24), but the damage and casualties were only light. Of large numbers of enemy aircraft which crossed the coast the next day, only a few managed to reach the suburbs, but there was a fairly heavy raid that night. The raids began again at 9.30 the next morning (Friday, September 6); hundreds of raiders were tackled over Kent and the Thames Estuary and some bombs were dropped in London itself. By midnight the capital had had six warnings, but the A.A. gunners could claim a bag of 61 raiders shot down in seven days, while between September 3 and 6 our defences as a whole had accounted for 154 Nazis, with a loss to the R.A.F. of 71 machines and 30 pilots.

But this was only the curtain-raiser. On September 7 Goering sent against London a fleet estimated at 500 raiders in a terrific attempt to smash through the defences, reach the metropolis, and obliterate the docks on which the lives of so many millions depend. Perchance, too, he thought that by one great blow London could be put out of action, even virtually destroyed.

Up the river and across the Kentish hills sped the horde of aircraft, the ugly Junkers and Heinkels surrounded by their clouds of nimble Messerschmitts. As they drew near they were met by a curtain of fire which to most of them proved impenetrable. Others were picked off by the British fighters and their Polish allies, who, darting in from the clouds, hung on to that menacing multitude. Numbers plunged to their doom. "We just gave them all we had got," said the leader of the Polish squadron of Hurricanes, whose bag for the day was 11; "opening fire at nearly 150 yards range, and only breaking away when we could see the enemy cockpit completely filling our gun sight. That means that we finished the attack at point-blank range. We went in practically in one straight line, all of us blazing away." Another Hurricane squadron of Canadians accounted likewise for 11 Nazis, while the Czechoslovaks shot down five.

So many had Goering flung into the fight, however—as one Hurricane squadron leader said, "there seemed oceans of them"—that it was inevitable that some should get through the defensive ring of guns and 'planes. High up in the sky they appeared over Dockland and London's East End, and,

LUFTWAFFE FAILED TO SHAKE BRITISH MORALE

Many bombs dropped on London by the Luftwaffe in September, 1940, fell in working-class districts like this, demolishing or rendering uninhabitable whole streets. But undaunted even by this grim ordeal, the people salvaged what they could and set up house again elsewhere.

Photo, Planet News





AT A DORNIER SALVAGE DUMP

Huge dumps, acres in extent, were needed to accommodate Nazi aircraft shot down over Britain in September, 1940. Here salvage workers demolishing a Dornier are seen at a lunchtime break.

Photo, Associated Press

seizing their moment, discharged their loads of high explosives and fire bombs. This was at about 5.30 in the afternoon. On humble tenements and great industrial plants, on wharves and streets they fell, with a force as terrible and deadly as it was undiscriminating. Numerous fires were started by the incendiaries, and their glow served as beacons for the relays of raiders who came along at about 8.30 and all through the night. The blaze was seen for miles round about, and when morning broke smoke was still rising from the ruins, although most of the fires had been got under control by the magnificent toil of London's firemen, professional and auxiliary. Much damage was done, and in the space of a few hours hundreds of Londoners were slaughtered, maimed, or rendered homeless. Acres of little homes were shattered, hospitals were laid in ruins, churches and public buildings demolished, and the facilities of ordered civilized existence interrupted.

While the raid was in progress its course was reported in a running commentary from every German radio station. Goering himself came on the air to boast of his exploits. Broadcasting from Northern France on September 8, he said: "Now is the historic hour when for the first time the German Air Force has struck at the heart of the enemy. After all the British provocatory attacks on Berlin the Fuehrer decided to order reprisal blows against London. I personally assumed command of these victorious German airmen, who for the first time have attacked London in broad daylight, accompanied by brave fighter comrades. They will continue to carry on their orders to full execution." Germany, officials in Berlin were already claiming, controlled the air over London.

In London it was admitted that the attacks exceeded in scale any that had preceded them, and heavy casualties were reported. That Saturday 306 persons were killed in London and 1,337 were injured. On the next day, when at nightfall raids were renewed in force, 286 were killed and some 1,400 seriously injured; and during the night of Monday, when (said the Air Ministry) "bombs were scattered over London without any distinction of objectives," the figures were about 400 killed and 1,400 injured.

London's citizens, declared the official communiqué, "met the blind savagery of these night attacks with admirable courage and resource."

Savagery of Night Attacks

On September 7 Mr. Winston Churchill went to the East End, and returned greatly impressed by the magnificent spirit shown by the much-bombed populace, and also by the efficiency of the civil defence organization, which was reported to be functioning smoothly and well (although it transpired later that here and there were to be noted weak spots to be put right).

Words are all too inadequate to describe the fearless and devoted work of the civil defence workers as a whole, however. A special tribute was paid to the whole of the ambulance service, about half of whose personnel were women drivers. The rescue parties did their hazardous work with indomitable tenacity and skill. The fire brigades

LONDON'S GROUND DEFENCES GO INTO ACTION

This untouched photograph shows local and distant searchlight batteries as they sprang into activity during a night alert at the end of August, 1940. The tracks of many tracer shells are also to be seen, a clear indication of the heavy curtain of fire flung up against the raiders by the A.A. gunners.

Photo, Sport & General



carried on most courageously under heavy bombardment, and their casualties are evidence—if evidence be needed—of their heroism and devotion in the path of duty. They paid for their bravery with a heavy price. The police, too, lived up to their highest reputation; and the wardens and all the miscellaneous personnel showed that the long months of waiting and boredom had not sapped their spirit or impaired their efficiency.

Night after night the raids continued, and the toll of casualties and of damage grew and grew. The Germans gloated over the successes which (they were assured) their airmen were gaining: Britain's defence is obviously weakening, they were told, and the presence of Polish and Czech pilots in the defending squadrons showed that there was a serious shortage of trained pilots in England . . . In America the progress of the battle was watched with the intensest interest, the deepest concern.

"London is not only the home of some 8,000,000 souls," said the "New York Herald Tribune," "she is also a home of our own civilization . . . And it is this city—fragile like all great cities, but tough like all human institutions into which courage and devotion have been woven—on which Herr Goering's brutal hand is sowing 1,000-lb. bombs and Molotoff breadbaskets."

"Fortunately," wrote the "New York Times," "the British are not ready to be terrorized. Their air defences remain stubborn and continue to bring down enemy aeroplanes from every raid. Their civilians are showing a cool heroism that was not surpassed by trained troops in the worst moments of the last war. Their industrial production does not appear to have been damaged severely, in spite of heavy blows around the Port of London. The British watchword today is, 'We can stand it.' This surely is not what Marshal Goering expected. He will have to hurl more terror for weeks or months of uninterrupted action before he can force the British spirit to crack and yield."

Volumes might, and will be, written of the horrors and glories of those dreadful days, and still more dreadful nights. Here we have space for but a glimpse or two of soul-stirring scenes. Here, for instance, we have a description by a 16-year-old girl of how on that Saturday afternoon she and her father and mother, her brother of 13 and little sister of seven, took refuge in the Anderson shelter behind their humble home in the heart of dockland.

"We could hear bombs whistling down all round us as we cowered in the back of the shelter, expecting to be hit every moment. Bombs were dropping in a recreation field behind us, and we thought that if they didn't hit us they would surely hit our house, where we had had to leave our poor little dog. We could hear her barking furiously at every explosion. Our shelter shook, and so did we, but my small sister went to sleep and never heard a thing. The rest of us ate sweets and tried to pretend we didn't mind. All the time fire-engines were rushing past clanging their bells. When the All Clear sounded and we started to come out of the shelter, my brother said, 'Hasn't it got dark?' Father said it was because we had been in the shelter—but it wasn't. It was a great smoke cloud all over the sky—awful thick, black smoke, which made our faces dirty. We thought for a moment that our house was on fire, but it was the reflection from the burning buildings farther down. We could see at least half-a-dozen fires blazing and great flames shooting up into the sky."



AFTER THE DOCKLAND RAID

Incidental to the great raid on the London docks of September 7, 1940, was the destruction of many dwelling-houses in East London. Here a warden helps homeless people on the way to a place of refuge.

Photo, Associated Press

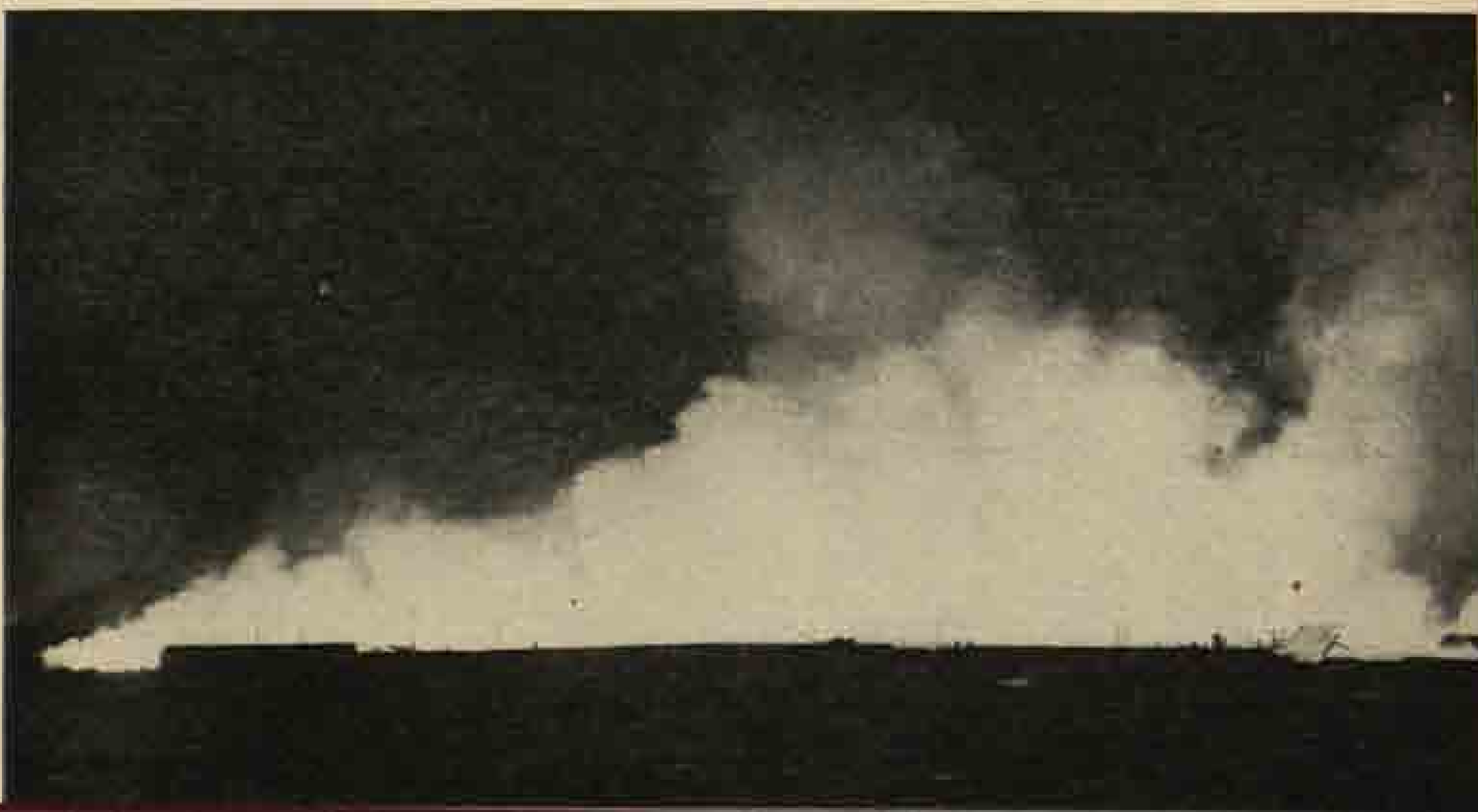
Then here is a picture drawn by an A.F.S. fireman, Mr. L. F. Bastin, who worked without stopping at a blaze from five o'clock on Saturday afternoon until after midnight.

"I saw hundreds of firemen working with bombs dropping all round. I counted 12 bombs as the rescue squads carried me to a

FIERY BACKGROUND OF THE ATTACK ON LONDON

In the eastern sky vast columns of smoke lit up by leaping flames were to be seen on the night of September 7, 1940. After a number of daylight attacks, Goering sent night bombers to set fire to London's port and docks. Though considerable damage was inflicted, it cost the Nazis the loss of 103 aircraft.

Photo, Associated Press



THE GREATEST DAY IN THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

September 15, 1940

The better to comprehend the nature of the months of bitter and nearly continuous air fighting in the summer and autumn of 1940 we extract, by permission, from the Air Ministry record, 'The Battle of Britain,' the following detailed story of one day. It was Sunday, September 15, one of 'the great days.' The actions in that period were described by Mr. Winston Churchill as 'the most brilliant and fruitful of any fought upon a large scale up to that date by the fighters of the Royal Air Force.'

OVER the South-East of England the day of Sunday, September 15, dawned a little misty, but cleared by eight o'clock and disclosed light cumulus cloud at 2,000 or 3,000 feet. The extent of this cloud varied, and in places it was heavy enough to produce light local showers. Visibility, however, was on the whole good throughout the day; the slight wind was from the west, shifting to north-west as the day advanced.

The first enemy patrols arrived soon after 9 a.m. They were reported to be in the Straits, in the Thames Estuary, off Harwich, and between Lympne and Dungeness. About 11.30 Goering launched the first wave of the morning attack, consisting of a hundred or more aircraft, soon followed by one hundred and fifty more. These crossed the English coast at three main points, near Ramsgate, between Dover and Folkestone, and a mile or two north of Dungeness. Their objective was London. This formidable force was composed of Dornier bomber 17s and 215s escorted by Me 109s. They flew at various heights between 15,000 and 26,000 feet. From the ground the German aircraft looked like black dots at the head of long streamers of white vapour; from the air like specks rapidly growing. They appeared first as model aeroplanes and then, as the range closed, as full-sized aircraft.

Battle was soon joined and raged for about three-quarters of an hour over East Kent and London. Some hundred German bombers burst through our defence and reached the eastern and southern quarters of the capital. A number of them were intercepted above the centre of the city itself just as Big Ben was striking the hour of noon.

To understand the nature of the combat, it must be remembered that the aircraft engaged in it were flying at a speed of between 300 and 400 miles an hour. At that speed place names become almost meaningless. The enemy, for example, might have been intercepted over Maidstone, but not destroyed until within a few miles of Calais. "Place attack was delivered—Hammersmith to Dungeness" or "London to the French Coast." Such phrases in the Intelligence Patrol Reports forcibly illustrate the size of the area over which the battle was fought. That being so, it is better perhaps not to attempt to plot the place of attack too accurately—an almost hopeless task—but to refer to it simply as the Southern Marches of England.

The battle in fact took place roughly in a cube about 80 miles long, 38 broad and from 5 to 6 miles high. It was in this space between noon and half-past that between 160 and 200 individual combats took place. Many of these developed into stern chases which were broken off within a mile or two of the French Coast.

'Achtung, Schpitfeuer!'

SIXTEEN squadrons of No. 11 Group, followed by five from Nos. 10 and 12, were sent up to engage the enemy. All but one of the squadrons taking part in the battle were very soon face to face with him. Five squadrons of Spitfires opened their attack against the oncoming Germans in the Maidstone-Canterbury-Dover-Dungeness area. These were in action slightly before the Hurricane squadrons, which intercepted farther back, between Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells and South London.

The Germans were found to be flying in various types of formations. The bombers were usually some thousands of feet below the fighters, but, sometimes this position was reversed. The bombers flew either in Vics (a "V"-shaped formation) of from five to seven aircraft or in lines of five aircraft abreast or in a diamond formation.

The Me 109s were usually in Vics. One pilot has described the attacking German aircraft as flying in little groups of nine arranged in threes like a sergeant's stripes. Each group of nine was supported by a group of nine Me 110 fighters with single-seater Me 109s or He 113s circling high above.

The enemy soon realized that our defence was awake and active, for the German pilots could be heard calling out to each other over their wireless 'phones "Achtung, Schpitfeuer!". They had need to keep alert. Our pilots opened fire at an average range of from 250 to 200 yards, closing when necessary to 50. Many of the enemy fighters belonged to the famous Yellow-Nose Squadrons, though some had white noses and even occasionally red.

Once the battle was joined, regular formation was frequently lost and each pilot chose an individual foe. The following account of one combat can be taken as typical.

A pilot, whose squadron was attacking in echelon starboard, dived out of the sun on to an Me 109, which blew up after receiving his first burst of fire. By this time he found that another Me 109 was on his tail. He turned, got it in his sights and set it on fire, with several bursts. He was now separated from his comrades and therefore returned to his base. As he was coming down he received a message saying that the enemy were above. He looked up, saw a group of Dorniers at 14,000 feet, climbed and attacked them. He got in a burst at a Dornier; other friendly fighters came up to help. The enemy aircraft crashed into a wood and exploded.

'Justification for Our New Tactics'

WHILE the Spitfires and Hurricanes were in action over Kent, other Hurricanes were dealing with such of the enemy as had succeeded by sheer force of numbers in breaking through and reaching the outskirts of London. Fourteen squadrons of Hurricanes, almost immediately reinforced by three more squadrons of Spitfires, took up this task, all of them coming into action between noon and twenty past. There ensued a continuous and general engagement extending from London to the coast and beyond. In it the tactics so carefully thought out, so assiduously practised, secured victory. Let a Squadron-Leader describe the results achieved.

"The 15th of September," he says, "dawned bright and clear at Croydon. It never seemed to do anything else during those exciting weeks of August and September. But to us it was just another day. We weren't interested in Hitler's entry into London; most of us were wondering whether we should have time to finish breakfast before the first blitz started. We were lucky.

"It wasn't till 9.30 that the sirens started wailing and the order came through to rendezvous base at 20,000 feet. As we were climbing in a southerly direction at 15,000 feet we saw thirty Heinkels supported by fifty Me 109s 4,000 feet above them, and twenty No. 110s to a flank, approaching us from above. We turned and climbed, flying in the same direction as the bombers with the whole squadron stringed out in echelon to port up sun, so that each man had a view of the enemy.

"'A' flight timed their attack to perfection, coming down sun in a power dive on the enemy's left flank. As each was selecting his own man, the Me 110 escort roared in to intercept with cannons blazing at 1,000 yards range, but they were two seconds too late—too late to engage our fighters, but just in time to make them hesitate long enough to miss the bomber leader. Two Heinkels heeled out of the formation.

"Meanwhile, the Me 110s had flashed out of sight, leaving the way clear for 'B' flight, as long as the Me 109s stayed above. 'B' flight leader knew how to bide his time, but just as he was about to launch his attack the Heinkels did the unbelievable thing. They turned south; into the sun; and into him. With his first burst the leader destroyed the leading bomber, which blew up with such force that it knocked a wing off the left-hand bomber. A little bank and a burst from his guns sent the right-hand Heinkel out of the formation with smoke pouring out of both engines. Before returning home he knocked down an Me 109. Four aircraft destroyed for an expenditure of 1,200 rounds was the best justification for our new tactics."





WHEN THE LUFTWAFFE LOST 185 IN ONE DAY

Sunday, September 15, 1940, was the greatest day of the Battle. In spite of fierce attacks only a few enemy bombers got to London, and below is seen a Dornier plunging to its doom: it crashed outside Victoria Station (bottom). Top, sky trails during a combat over Kent. Centre, two enemy aircraft shot down in this area.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; "Daily Mirror"; Planet News







car a quarter of an hour away. On the dockside itself, right among the heart of these fires, civilians were standing round helping. Young girls and old men formed human chains passing buckets of water to the firemen when we could not get water from the hydrant. The spirit of the people was marvellous. I never saw anything like it. I saw great lorries burning up like matches." He concluded with another dramatic touch. "Although they could see the stupendous size of the fire, firemen going to the blaze were singing 'Roll Out the Barrel.'"

Now the story is taken up by a watchman, 16-year-old Albert Bondfield, at John Lewis's, one of the three great stores in Oxford Street—the others were D. H. Evans and Bourne & Hollingsworth—which were practically destroyed on the night of September 17. Bondfield was on the roof as a fire watcher.

"We did have a night of it," he said. "While we were waiting for our relief there was a scream. We threw ourselves against the sandbags and then a bomb hit the building. I had just time to get against the sandbags when another bomb landed. I phoned that down just as another whistled by. I put the phone down quick and clutched the sandbags. They came away in my hand from the blast. Then we found the phone was dead. The fire was getting near, so we thought we might go." Clambering down the iron ladder into the shattered building, he reached the basement, where several hundreds of people had taken shelter. They were now being got away safely to a shelter in another store. "We gave the girls in the shelter," Bondfield went on, "a pick-a-back through the water from the automatic fire sprinkler. Some were more scared of being dropped in the wet than of the bombs. Then we hunted round in the water and salvaged our things. . . . I wouldn't say I wasn't afraid. But we thought the first one was right on top of us. When it wasn't, we didn't worry any more."

Next we may stand beside Robin Duff, a member of the B.B.C. staff, as on the Sunday morning, September 8, having heard the drone of 'planes, he rushed out of his flat in his pyjamas.

"There in the sky," he said in his broadcast, "I saw a Dornier 17 swooping down over St. George's Hospital, near Buckingham Palace. It was followed by a Spitfire. A few seconds later there was a great explosion in the air, and the German 'plane broke into pieces. As far as I could see only one of the crew baled out, and his parachute was already badly damaged by the explosion. The rest of the crew presumably had already been killed. I have often seen German 'planes crashing to earth, but this was the first time that I had seen one smash up completely in the air. The engine and the bulk of the machine crashed into the forecourt of Victoria Station.

"Some way farther down the road, on top of a house, came the tail of the machine. As for one wing, it fell just outside a public house, which must have been anything up



LONDON HAD SUPREME CONFIDENCE IN HER DEFENDERS

Twists and turns of the raiding Messerschmitts and our attacking fighters were shown by the vapour trails as the combatants jockeyed for position. Top, the sky over Kent during a 'dog-fight'; below, Londoners eagerly watch another such combat early in September, 1940.

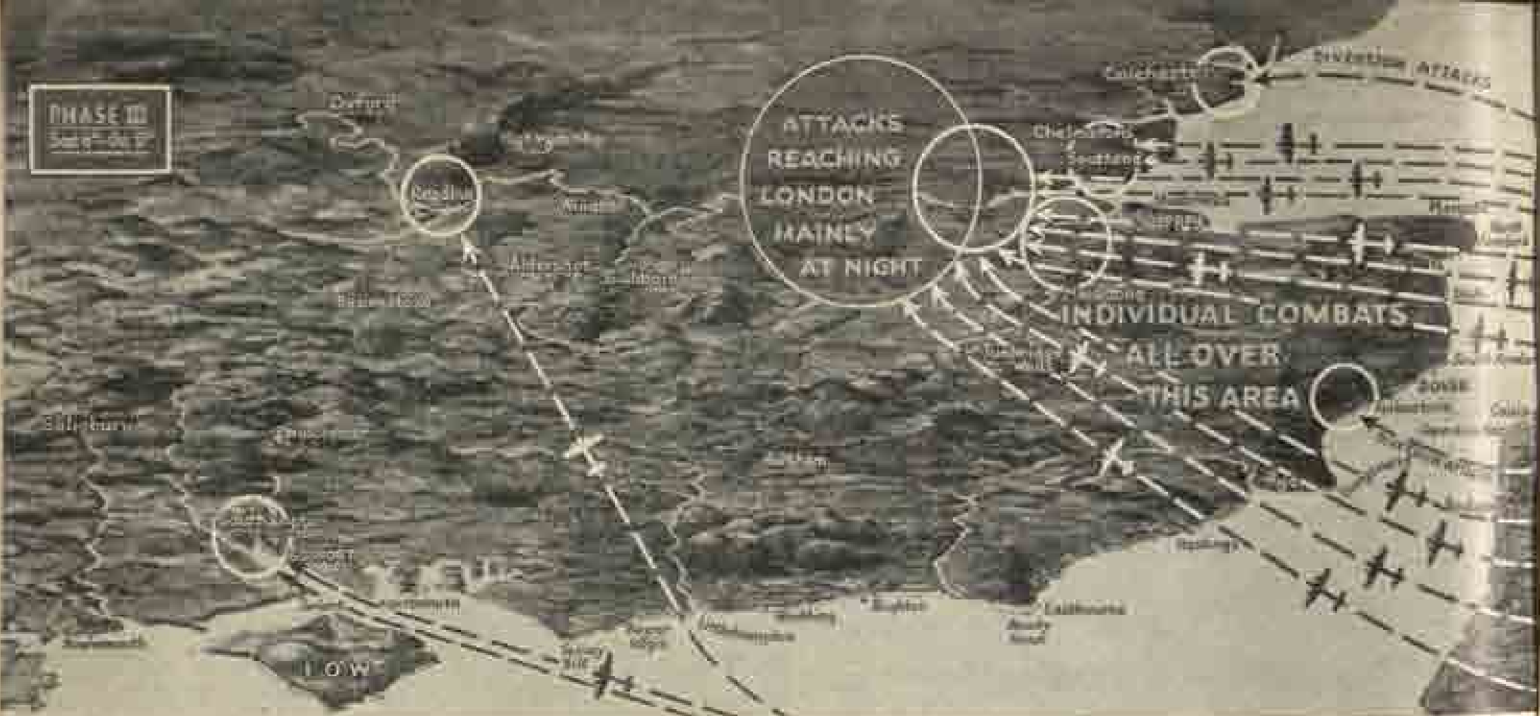
Photos, J. W. Riddam; Wide World



LONDON AFTER A NIGHT OF HEAVY BOMBING

Here are scenes on the morrow of the big raid of September 9, 1940. Hospitals seemed to be deliberately selected for destruction by the Nazis: the centre photograph shows nurses and infants sheltering in the lower corridors of one that was hit and set on fire. The other views are (top, left) Holborn, looking East; right, the approach to London Bridge, with flaming gas main; lower left, the Quadrant, Regent Street; and lower right, Guardsmen helping with the fire-hoses in Cheapside.

Photos, Associated Press; Keystone; Topical Press; Fox



CLIMAX OF THE BATTLE: THE GREAT ASSAULTS ON LONDON

A last desperate throw to achieve victory was made by the Nazis from September 7 onwards. As this diagram of Phase III shows, the scene of battle now shifted eastwards. Between September 6 and October 5 the enemy lost 883 aircraft. In the biggest engagement, on September 15, two aerial armies, each of 250 machines, were employed: the Nazis lost 185 aircraft.

From the Ministry of Information record: "The Battle of Britain"

to half a mile away. As I got near this pub—not in my pyjamas any longer—I heard an absolute babel of voices. I went in and found everybody talking at the tops of their voices, absolutely thrilled at what they had seen. They had been through a good deal, these people, and the great anti-aircraft barrage that we had heard during the past few nights had already put new heart into them; but that battered wing of a Dornier, lying in the street, encouraged them more than anything else in the world could do."

Now let us say something of the episode of the St. Paul's bomb. On the night of September 11 a huge time-bomb—it weighed over a ton and was some 8 feet in length—was dropped in the roadway of Dean's Yard, close to the west end of St. Paul's Cathedral. A squad of the Bomb Disposal section—those Royal Engineers whose heroism is of the cold-blooded type, since it is their job to dig out the bombs which have failed to explode (but which may explode at any moment), carry them away to some open space, and then touch them off—was soon on the scene, and worked continuously until the evening of September 15, when the bomb was dragged from its bed of clay with the aid of two lorries linked together. Then the bomb was placed on a lorry and driven at top speed through the City to Hackney Marshes, where it was safely exploded. The officer in charge of the squad, Temp. Lieutenant Robert Davies, R.E., was awarded the George Cross. Sapper Wylie, one of his assistants in this dangerous job, also received the Cross.

The St. Paul's Bomb

They were in the van of a noble and ever-growing army of civilian heroes, since their names were included in the first list of recipients of that decoration whose creation the King announced in his broadcast from Buckingham Palace on September 23. "Many and glorious are the deeds of gallantry done during these perilous but famous days. In order that they should be worthily and promptly recognized I have decided to create at once a new mark of honour for men and women in all walks of civilian life. I propose to give my name to this new distinction, which will consist of the George Cross, which will rank next to the Victoria Cross, and the George Medal for wider distribution."

Never before in history had civilians been granted such opportunities of showing the innate heroism of their race, and they rose to the topmost flights of the opportunity. And never for a moment was the humour of the Cockneys damped. They laughed and joked as they took shelter, made light of the discomforts of the Tubes where they slept, or tried to sleep, picked their way unconcernedly along the glass-littered streets, in and out of the heaps of rubble. Even the children played, for—the pity of it—there were still thousands of children at large in the much-bombed town.

Broadcasting to New York on September 21, the Lord Mayor of London, Sir William Coxen, paid a well-deserved tribute to his people. "Today London stands as the very bulwark of civilization and freedom," he said. "These streets of my city will be defended to the last. London City has sometimes been attacked, but never sacked. London has steeled herself for resistance and victory . . ."

To which the Lord Mayor of New York, Mr. La Guardia, replied: "Bravo, London. We have listened to you with fascinated admiration. We are praying for you. Thumbs up, London."

Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday; by day and by night London was exposed to a terrific ordeal. And again on Wednesday (September 11); but that night hardly had the warning sirens sounded in London—those "banshee wailings" as Mr. Churchill very aptly described them—when a tremendous anti-aircraft barrage was put

German and British Air Losses over Britain

September, 1940

Date	German	British	R.A.F. Pilots Saved	Date	German	British	R.A.F. Pilots Saved
Sept.				Sept.			
1	29	15	4	17	13	3	2
2	66	20	12	18	48	12	19
3	25	15	8	19	5	—	—
				19/20	2	—	—
4	57	17	12	20	4	7	3
4/5	3	—	—				
5	38	20	9	21	3	—	—
5/6	1	—	—				
6	46	19	12	22	1	—	—
7	103	22	4	23	11	11	8
				23/24	2	—	—
8	11	3	1	24	8	5	2
8/9	3	1	—				
9	52	13	6	25	26	4	3
10	2	—	—				
				26	33	8	5
11	89	24	7	26/27	1	—	—
11/12	2	—	—	27	133	34	17
12	1	—	—				
12/13	1	—	—	28	6	7	—
13	1	—	—	28/29	5	—	—
13/14	3	—	—	29	8	4	2
14	13	9	6	29/30	1	—	—
				30	46	22	12
15	185	25	14	30/Oct. 1	1	—	—
15/16	6	—	—				
16	—	—	—				
16/17	1	—	—	Totals	1,093	320	179

up. It was by far the loudest and the heaviest which the capital had yet heard, and only now and again above the roar of the multitude of guns could be heard the noise of the engines of an approaching raider. "Our noise," as the Londoners called it, was exceedingly popular; at last the man in the street had a feeling that we were giving the Germans as good as they gave us. The people, never very downhearted, were now much more cheerful; and when Mr. Herbert Morrison paid a visit to a bombed area in North London he was frequently exhorted to "Go to it, Herbert!" and he was assured time and again that "We can take it." When he told the people to "keep their chins up," they were swift to reply that they were already doing so. And this despite the mounting death roll, the ever-increasing wastes of shattered buildings and debris-littered streets.

American and other comments on civilian morale, and general notes on the Home Front in this period appear in Chapter 122.

At least it could be said that the raiders were no respecters of persons, since the falling bombs ruined the working-class tenement together with the mansion of the millionaire. The King's home, too, was hit, not once but many times. The first bomb fell on Buckingham Palace in the course of the raid on Sunday, September 8, although it did not explode until the following Tuesday morning. The second attack was delivered on September 13, and a third two days later. "Like so many other people," said the King in a telegram to Mr. Churchill, in reply to the War Cabinet's "hearty congratulations to Your Majesties on your providential escape from the barbarous attack made on your home and royal persons," "we have now had a personal experience of German barbarity, which only strengthens the resolution of all of us to fight through to final victory."

The King's Home Bombed

That week-end the German wireless stations reported, on the alleged authority of an American journalist, that the British Government, the Court, and the Diplomatic Corps were on the point of leaving London. The Ministry of Information was swift to deny the canard, pointing out that allegations of this kind were to be expected from Germany and German-controlled sources within the next few days, as Dr. Goebbels was redoubling his efforts—which had so far conspicuously failed—to convince the world that London's spirit was cracking. Other fantastic stories going round at about this time spoke of famine and pestilence stalking through the London streets; while half the population (so it was said) was trying to flee from London into the safety of the country, the other half was doping itself with cocaine. A cordon of police had been drawn around the city and thousands were patrolling the outskirts to prevent the mass flight. Anybody who tried to buy a ticket at one of the few railway stations still open had to show a permit from the "City Council." The Nazi propagandists even knew where the cocaine had come from; it had been smuggled into England shortly before in a cargo of wheat, was sent by parcel post to London, and was being retailed extensively in the West End!

Sunday, September 15, marked the climax of this phase of the battle. 500 German aircraft, 250 in the morning and the same number in the afternoon, engaged in a running fight with our Hurricanes and Spitfires over the vast battlefield extending from London's western suburbs to the cliffs of Kent, from the Thames Estuary to the coast of Northern France. On that great day 185 enemy machines—131 of them bombers—are known to have been destroyed, representing a loss of nearly 50 per cent of the enemy force engaged. The R.A.F., on the other hand, lost only 25 'planes, and the pilots of 12 of

WEST END VICTIM OF THE NIGHT RAID OF SEPTEMBER 17, 1940

Dropping a 'stick' of bombs along the straight line of Oxford Street, on September 17, the Nazis hit three big department stores: Bourne & Hollingsworth, John Lewis & Co., and D. H. Evans, Ltd., the first two being very severely damaged. This building of John Lewis & Co. was set on fire and then assailed with H.E. bombs. Some ten thousand employee-partners were affected, for the firm had a long-established profit-sharing scheme. *Photo, Fox*















LIFE IN THE METROPOLIS WENT ON MUCH AS USUAL

For twelve months the people of British cities had been nerving themselves to face heavy raids, and when these came to London in September, 1940, the citizens stood the ordeal magnificently. 1, Shelter space in Tube tunnels was reserved for women, children and the infirm. 2, Incident Officer's post established during a raid. 3, Bus windows were protected by anti-splinter net. 4, Lambeth Walk: the street market carries on. 5, An alfresco kitchen outside a bombed restaurant. 6, Bunks for children in air-raid shelters.

Photos, Planet News; G.P.U.; Topical Press; Keystone; L.N.A.

these were saved. The story of this day's battle is given in page 1208.

That was the climax, but the Nazis continued their raids both by day and by night; and although London continued to be the main target, operations were largely extended in the provinces. Thus Merseyside experienced its first big raid on September 18, when waves of bombers carried out an attack which was as fierce as it was indiscriminate. Bristol, too, suffered heavily when on September 25 it had the first of many daylight attacks.

Another major assault came on September 27—indeed, it was the heaviest daylight attack delivered by the Luftwaffe since September 15. The raiders came over in four waves, three of them directed against London and south-east England, and the fourth against Bristol. Both objectives were strongly defended; and though a number of bombs were dropped the enemy hosts were broken up by air and ground resistance, and suffered heavy losses. The total for the day was 133 Nazis down, compared with the R.A.F. loss of 34 'planes, with 17 pilots safe.

Fighter Defence Triumphs Again

Still the battle went on, and a great part of England was scarred and pitted by the bombs. There was never a day, never a night, when London was not attacked; but still the mounting casualties and growing damage failed altogether to daunt the spirit of the people. There was another big attack, or series of attacks, on September 30, but only a few of the raiders succeeded in arriving over London, so determined was the fighter resistance which they encountered. Yet another main assault was delivered on October 5, but once again the invading squadrons were broken up by the fighters and A.A. fire.

By now the sky, which throughout the summer had been so brilliantly clear, was clouded over, and ground mists, morning and evening, made it difficult for the raiders to take off from and return home to their aerodromes across the Channel. No doubt, too, the fearful toll exacted by our defences had its part in lessening the size and weight of subsequent attacks. It was noticeable that on many occasions the raiders jettisoned their bombs before reaching their objectives, as soon as they found themselves in too dangerous contact with our fighters. Then the Nazis began to make increasing use of fighters flying miles up in the sky. Half an hour or so before the Junkers and Heinkels made their appearance, a screen of Messerschmitts, high up above the clouds, strove to draw off our fighters, and leave the air clear for the bombers. In this they were seldom successful, for while the high fighter screen was being engaged by Spitfire squadrons, squadrons of Hurricanes were in readiness to tackle the bombers, and other squadrons maintained a patrol above aerodromes round about London.

These arrangements worked well, as is demonstrated by the terrible losses inflicted on the Luftwaffe. Thus, between September 11 and October 5 No. 11 Group of Fighter Command—the Group which bore the brunt of the fighting, although from time to time it was reinforced by elements of Nos. 10 and 12 Groups—destroyed 442 enemy aircraft for certain, and, no doubt, many more went down to destruction into the Channel and the North Sea, or crashed when they attempted to land in their home territory. On the other hand, the Group suffered a loss of only 58 pilots, representing a ratio of seven and a half Nazis lost for every one British pilot. On one day, September 27, No. 11 Group destroyed 99 German aircraft—the total for that day was 133—for the loss of 15 pilots, a proportion of six and a half to one. On September 30 it destroyed 32, losing only two pilots in the process; and on October 5 it shot down 22 of the enemy, with a loss of only one pilot. Between September 6 and October 5 the Luftwaffe lost 883 aircraft.

So ended the third phase of the epoch-making battle.





ST. PAUL'S WAS SAVED FROM DESTRUCTION

On the night of September 12, 1940, the first of many air attacks was made on St. Paul's Cathedral. A delayed-action bomb fell close to West door. It was dug out by men of the Bomb Disposal Unit, R.E., under Lieut. R. Davies, who was later awarded the George Cross. Right, above, digging out a similar 1-ton bomb from a London hospital a few days later.

Photos, Keystone; Fox

Historic Documents. CLXXV–CLXXVIII

LONDON THE 'SYMBOL AND CITADEL OF FREEDOM'

The first half of September, 1940, was marked by large-scale daylight air attacks on London, in countering which the R.A.F. won deathless fame. We give below extracts from two speeches of the Prime Minister, his enthusiastic message to the Fighter Command, and the heartening broadcast of the King, in which his Majesty paid tribute to the "unconquerable spirit of the people" by creating a new Order for civilians—the George Cross and Medal.

MR. CHURCHILL IN A BROADCAST SPEECH, SEPTEMBER 11:

These cruel, wanton, indiscriminate bombings of London are, of course, a part of Hitler's invasion plan. He hopes, by killing large numbers of civilians, and women and children, that he will terrorize and cow the people of this mighty Imperial city and make them a burden and anxiety for the Government, and thus distract our attention unduly from the ferocious onslaught he is preparing. Little does he know the spirit of the British nation, or the tough fibre of the Londoners whose forebears played a leading part in the establishment of Parliamentary institutions and who have been bred to value freedom far above their lives.

This wicked man, the repository and embodiment of many forms of soul-destroying hatred, this monstrous product of former wrongs and shames, has now resolved to try to break our famous island race by a process of indiscriminate slaughter and destruction. What he has done is to kindle a fire in British hearts, here and all over the world, which will glow long after all traces of the conflagrations he has caused in London have been removed. He has lighted a fire which will burn with a steady and consuming flame until the last vestiges of Nazi tyranny have been burnt out of Europe, and until the Old World and the New can join hands to rebuild the temples of man's freedom and man's honour on foundations which will not soon or easily be overthrown.

This is the time for everyone to stand together and hold firm, as they are doing. I express my admiration for the exemplary manner in which the air-raid precaution services in London are being discharged, especially the fire brigades, whose work has been so heavy and also dangerous.

All the world that is still free marvels at the composure and fortitude with which the citizens of London are facing and surmounting the great ordeal to which they are subjected, the end of which, or the severity of which, cannot yet be foreseen. It is a message of good cheer to our fighting forces, on the seas, in the air and in our waiting armies, in all their posts and stations, that we send them from this capital city. They know that they have behind them a people who will not flinch or weary of the struggle, hard and protracted though it will be, but that we shall rather draw from the heart of suffering the means of inspiration and survival, and of a victory won not only for ourselves, but for all—a victory won not only for our own times, but for the long and better days that are to come.

MR. CHURCHILL IN A MESSAGE TO THE FIGHTER COMMAND, SEPTEMBER 16:

Yesterday eclipses all previous records of the Fighter Command. Aided by squadrons of their Czech and Polish comrades, using only a small proportion of their total strength, and under cloud conditions of some difficulty, they cut to rags and tatters three separate waves of murderous assault upon the civil population of their native land, inflicting a certain loss of 125 bombers and 53 fighters upon the enemy, to say nothing of probables and damaged, while themselves sustaining only a loss of 12 pilots and 25 machines. These results exceed all expectations and give just and sober confidence in the approaching struggle.

MR. CHURCHILL IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, SEPTEMBER 17:

Sunday's action was the most brilliant and fruitful of any fought upon a large scale up to that date by the fighters of the Royal Air Force. The figures have already been made public. To the best of my belief—and I have made searching inquiries and taken several cross checks—those figures are not in any way exaggerated. . . .

The German attacks upon the civil population have been concentrated mainly upon London, in the hopes of terrorizing its citizens into submission, or to throw them into confusion, and also in the silly idea that they will put pressure upon the Government to make peace. The deliberate and repeated attacks upon Buckingham Palace and upon the persons of our beloved King and Queen are also intended, apart from their general barbarity, to have an unsettling effect upon public opinion. They have, of course, the opposite effect. They unite the King and Queen to their people by new and sacred bonds of common danger, and they steel the hearts of all to the stern and unrelenting prosecution of the war against so foul a foe.

H.M. THE KING IN A BROADCAST TO BRITAIN AND THE EMPIRE, SEPTEMBER 24:

In this battle for Britain, London, the mighty capital of the Empire, occupies the forefront. Other of our cities are being subjected to the barbarous attacks of the enemy. Our sympathy goes out to them all. But it is London that is for the time being bearing the brunt of the enemy's spite. I am speaking to you now from Buckingham Palace, with its honourable scars, to Londoners first of all, though of course my words apply equally to all the British cities, towns and hamlets who are enduring the same dangers. The Queen and I have seen many of the places here which have been most heavily bombed and many of the people who have suffered and are suffering most. Our hearts are with them tonight. Their courage and cheerfulness, their faith in their country's cause and final victory, are an inspiration to the rest of us.

To the men and women who carry on the work of the A.R.P. services I should like to say a special word of gratitude. The devotion of these civilian workers, firemen, salvage men, and many others in the face of grave and constant danger has won a new renown for the British name. These men and women are worthy partners of our armed Forces and our police—of the Navy, once more as so often before our sure shield, and the Merchant Navy, of the Army and the Home Guard, alert and eager to repel any invader, and of the Air Force, whose exploits are the wonder of the world.

Tonight, indeed, we are a nation on guard and in the line. Each task, each bit of duty done, however simple and domestic it may be, is part of our war work. It takes rank with the sailor's, the soldier's, and the airman's duty. The men and women in the factories or on the railways who work on regardless of danger, though the sirens have sounded, maintaining all the services and necessities of our common life and keeping the fighting line well supplied with weapons, earn their place among the heroes of this war. No less honour is due to all those who night after night uncomplainingly endure discomfort, hardship and peril in their homes.

Many and glorious are the deeds of gallantry done during these perilous but famous days. In order that they should be worthily and promptly recognized I have decided to create at once a new mark of honour for men and women in all walks of civilian life. I propose to give my name to this new distinction, which will consist of the George Cross, which will rank next to the Victoria Cross, and the George Medal for wider distribution.

As we look around us we see on every side that in the hour of her trial the Mother City of the British Commonwealth is proving herself to be built as a city that is at unity in itself. It is not the walls that make the city but the people that live within them. The walls of London may be battered, but the spirit of the Londoner stands resolute and undismayed. As in London, so throughout Great Britain, buildings rich in beauty and historic interest may be wantonly attacked, humbler houses, no less dear and familiar, may be destroyed. But "there'll always be an England" to stand before the world as the symbol and citadel of freedom, and to be our own dear home.

Diary of the War

SEPTEMBER, 1940

September 1, 1940. R.A.F. bomb Dutch aerodromes and naval base at Lorient. Munich raided for first time. Other night targets are Emden, Kassel, Soest and Mannheim. Aircraft works at Turin and Milan bombed. Heavy raids on S.E. coast. Nazis lose 25 planes, Britain 16.

September 2. Submarine "Sturgeon" sinks 10,000-ton transport. Heavy R.A.F. night raids on N.W. Germany, Lorient, shipping off Dutch coast, Ostend harbour, and targets at Genoa. Fierce air battles over S.E. England. Night attacks in Bristol Channel and South Wales area. Germans lose 55 machines, Britain 15.

September 3. R.A.F. make night raids on German forests, power stations, oil tanks, goods yards and aerodromes, barge concentrations in Beveland Canal. Raiders try to reach aerodromes near London. Twenty-five shot down for 15 British. U.S.A. agree to exchange 50 over-age destroyers for bases along Atlantic seaboard. German transport torpedoed.

September 4. Determined raids on Britain. Germans lose 54 planes, Britain 17. R.A.F. bomb invasion ports and many targets in N.W. Germany. Heavy raids on enemy aerodromes in Eastern Libya.

September 5. Admiralty announce five-day naval operations in Mediterranean when Italian Fleet turned tail. Italian naval and air bases bombed. Destroyers "Ivanhoe" and "Esk" reported sunk. R.A.F. bomb supplies in German forests, Channel invasion ports and Fiat works at Turin. Renewed attacks on Britain. Enemy lose 39 aircraft, Britain 20.

September 6. Three-hour night raid on Berlin and elsewhere in Germany. Big enemy attacks over S.E. England. Night raids on London, Liverpool and other towns in West. Nazis lose 46 machines, Britain 15. King Carol abdicates.

September 7. Heavy attack on London. Many fierce air fights. Destructive fires in East End. Enemy lose 103 machines, Britain 22. R.A.F. bomb Channel ports and targets in N.W. Germany.

September 8. Two enemy supply ships sunk off Norway. R.A.F. bomb Channel ports and convoys in North Sea. Prolonged night attacks on London. Docks suffer heavily. Enemy lose 11 planes, Britain 3.

September 9. Announced that in Mediterranean submarine "Osiris" has sunk one Italian supply ship and submarine "Rorqual" two. Submarine "Phoenix" presumed lost. R.A.F. blow up Neukölln gasworks at Berlin. Sustained attacks on invasion barges. Day and night raiders over London. Fifty-two shot down: Britain loses 13.

September 10. R.A.F. bomb Berlin, Bremen, Wilhelmshaven, barge concentrations, docks and harbours on French, Belgian and Dutch coasts, and many aerodromes. Heavy night attack on London. Two raiders destroyed.

September 11. R.A.F. bomb military targets at Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen, Wilhelmshaven and Frankfurt; barge concentrations, docks and shipping at Channel ports, convoys off Dunkirk. Enemy attempt big attack on London, but are driven off. Night raids directed chiefly against S. London and suburbs. Enemy lose 89 aircraft, Britain 24.

September 12. Sporadic attacks on Britain. Enemy lose three aircraft, Britain none. R.A.F. attack oil stores, shipping and docks at Emden and Flushing. Other forces bomb key distribution centres and Norderney seaplane base.

September 13. Italians cross Egyptian frontier and occupy Sollum. R.A.F. attack convoy of tankers off mole at Zeebrugge. Heavy night raids on invasion bases. Heavy night raid on London. South Wales town bombed. Enemy lose two aircraft.

September 14. R.A.F. make sustained attacks on shipping, barge concentrations and supplies at Channel ports. Daylight raids in many areas, including London. Midlands town damaged at night. Enemy lose 13 planes, Britain 9.

September 15. Germans lose 185 machines, Britain 25, in mass raids on S.E. England. Intense air fights over Kent. Two formations reach London. Two attacks on Portland and Southampton areas. Night raiders over London, S.W. England, Midlands, and S.E. Scotland. R.A.F. bomb war supplies, shipping and barges at ports along North Sea and Channel coasts, and supply centres in N.W. Germany.

September 16. Fleet Air Arm attack Benghazi, damaging ships in harbour. Italian advance guard in Egypt reach Sidi Barrani. R.A.F. raid Calais, Ostend, Dunkirk and Veere. Large enemy formations driven off during day. At night bombs fall in London, Home Counties, Midlands and North-West. Enemy lose seven aircraft, Britain one.

September 17. "City of Benares," carrying children to Canada, torpedoed. R.A.F. raid Ostend, Zeebrugge, barges off Dutch coast and Ymuiden aerodrome. Night attacks on invasion ports and Rhineland centres. Heavy night raids on London and Merseyside. Enemy lose 12 planes, Britain three.

September 18. Submarine "Narwhal" presumed lost. R.A.F. attack convoy off Borkum, aerodrome of De Kooy and Cherbourg. Fiercest night attack yet made on invasion ports. Italian bases in Dodecanese raided. Heavy night attacks on London, Merseyside, Midlands, etc. Enemy lose 48 aircraft, Britain 12.

September 19. Fleet Air Arm bomb Benghazi. R.A.F. attack Dortmund-Ems Canal, Ostend, Flushing and Dunkirk. Small-scale day attacks on Britain. Night raids directed chiefly against London and suburbs. Five raiders shot down.

September 20. Intense attacks on invasion ports and targets in N.W. Germany. R.A.F. attack aerodromes in Western Desert. Large enemy formations driven back from S.E. coast. Minor attack on London at night. Germans lose four aircraft, Britain seven.

September 21. R.A.F. make continuous attacks on invasion bases and enemy shipping. Sidi Barrani and troop positions bombed. Minor raids on Britain. In evening many air combats along Thames Estuary. At night bombs fall in London, in 20 S.E. towns and villages, and in a town in N.W. England.

September 22. Submarine "Osiris" sinks Italian destroyer in Adriatic. Sloop "Dundee" reported sunk. R.A.F. make widespread raids in Germany, Holland, Belgium and France. Navy attacks enemy positions in Sidi Barrani area.

September 23. Heavy R.A.F. raid on Berlin and other German targets. Channel invasion ports vigorously bombed. Air attacks on Menastir aerodrome and Tobruk harbour. Raiders attack Eastbourne and other seaside towns. At night bombs fall in London. Nazis lose 11 aircraft, Britain 11. Gen. de Gaulle, with Free French Force and British naval squadron, arrives off Dakar and there is exchange of bombardment.

September 24. Submarine "Thames" reported lost. Coastal Command attack Zeebrugge and Brest. Night raid on Berlin and other places. Enemy aircraft attack across Kent coast and Thames Estuary. Southampton attacked. Night raids on Central London and Wales. Enemy lose eight planes, Britain four.

September 25. Gen. de Gaulle abandons operations at Dakar. R.A.F. raid Berlin, Kiel and Channel ports. Navy shells Sidi Barrani area. Day raid on Bristol. Air battle over Bournemouth. Heavy night attack on London. Enemy lose 25 aircraft, Britain four.

September 26. Three supply vessels reported sunk by submarines H 49 and "Tuna." Heavy R.A.F. attacks on Channel ports. Day attacks on coastal towns from Hastings to Southampton. Heavy night raid on London and suburbs. Enemy lose 34 aircraft, Britain eight.

September 27. Germany, Italy and Japan sign ten-year pact. R.A.F. make large-scale attacks on invasion ports, Lorient and targets in N.W. Germany. Massed day raids on S. England: three on London: air fights near Bristol. Germans lose 133 aircraft, Britain 34.

September 28. Bombs fall by day in S.E. areas. Raiders near Portsmouth driven off. Night attacks on London, S.E. England, Merseyside and East Midlands. Germans lose six aircraft, Britain seven. R.A.F. raid Berlin, Wilhelmshaven, Channel ports and Lorient.

September 29. R.A.F. bomb oil refineries, aluminium works, gasworks and goods yards in N.W. Germany. Widespread night raids. Serious fires in London and on Merseyside. Ten enemy planes destroyed against four British.

September 30. Six heavy day attacks against S.E. England and Bristol area. At night bombs fall in London and on Merseyside. Enemy lose 49 aircraft, Britain 22. R.A.F. raid German bases. Berlin bombed for four hours.

Chapter 116

THE SEA AFFAIR: UNAIDED, BRITAIN'S NAVY MEETS THE AXIS CHALLENGE

Naval Position in August, 1940—Italian Threat to the Mediterranean—Preventing the Invasion of Britain—Motor Torpedo Craft in Action—Our Destroyer Losses—Mediterranean Sweeps—Italian Main Fleet Comes Out—Dive-Bombers Off Malta—Bombardment of Dodecanese—American Destroyers Delivered to Britain—Change in Mediterranean Command

In order to appreciate fully the naval position at the end of July and the beginning of August, 1940, and the course that naval operations took during the next period of the war, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the whole political, military and strategic position in which Great Britain found herself at that time, with its effect upon British sea power.

Little more than a month had elapsed since the collapse of France. Seven weeks before, Italy had entered the war. The Italian Navy presented a serious threat to British naval control of the Mediterranean and to Empire communications through that sea. Numerically strong Italian armies in Libya and in East Africa, including Abyssinia, menaced Egypt with what appeared to be an alarming pincer movement.

The terms of the French armistice gave Germany control of the whole of the French Channel and Atlantic coastlines, with their valuable ports and naval bases. Indeed, Germany now controlled the entire western seaboard of Europe from the North Cape at the tip of Norway to the Spanish frontier in the corner of the Bay of Biscay. Her possession of such French ports as Brest, Lorient, La Rochelle and Bordeaux gave her naval bases farther westward into the Atlantic—with easier and quicker access to the vital Atlantic shipping lanes, both north to south and east to west—than were available to the Royal Navy. The handicap which the lack of the Irish bases of Queenstown, Berehaven, Blacksod Bay and Lough Swilly placed upon the Royal Navy in its warfare against the U-boats (*see* Chapter 109) was not fully recognized until later, but its operational effects were being felt even then.

Though the "melancholy" actions against the French Fleet in Oran and at Dakar (*see* Chapters 104 and 105) and the surrender of French warships at Alexandria and in Britain had materially reduced the potency of the threat presented by the possibility of that Fleet's falling into German hands, the loss to the Allies of French naval help was proving a crippling blow, and in every department of sea warfare it placed a double burden upon the Royal Navy. Where previously the French Navy had assumed its share of the work of escorting and convoying merchant shipping and of maintaining the blockade, the Royal Navy now found itself faced with doing these two tasks unaided, against an immensely lengthened enemy coastline and a much improved enemy strategic position.

Faced with the Italian threat, the British armies in Egypt and the Middle East required strong reinforcements in men and material, and the Navy had to assure safe passage for the convoys carrying them there from Britain and the Empire.

But overtopping in importance all else was the imminent threat of invasion of the British Isles. In possession of advanced aerodromes in occupied territory, many less than fifty miles from the British coast, and in control of a large number of ports on a coastline which half-encircled Britain on the east and south, from any or several of which he could mount a sea-borne invasion, the enemy's advantages for such an operation were very great. That he intended an invasion had become very

Advantages for an Invader

WHEN ITALIAN SHIPS WERE FOUND

From August 31 to October 12 a series of extensive sweeps of the western and eastern Mediterranean was carried out by the Fleet with but occasional luck in making contact with Italian forces. In September two Italian battleships and a number of cruisers and destroyers were found and a battleship hit at extreme range before the Italians retired. In this photograph H.M.S. 'Malaya' is seen with her guns trained on an Italian battleship.

Photo, Central Press





WHERE THOUSANDS FOUND A SAFE REFUGE FROM NAZI BOMBS

During the severe and long-continued night raids of September, 1940, the deep tunnels of London's 'Underground' were thrown open to people who had no other air-raid shelter. At first only makeshift accommodation could be provided, but as time went on proper bunks and sleeping spaces were made available. Here is a scene at Piccadilly station at 1 a.m. during a raid.

Photo, Associated Press



THE MORNING AFTER THE RAID

What German air raids meant to the civilian population of Britain is summed up in this remarkable photograph taken after a night attack on an East London district on September 21, 1940. Householders blasted out of their homes wait patiently tend their salvaged belongings while wardens and repair squads go about their duties; on the far side of the road can be seen the flag of a first-aid post. Such scenes became all too familiar during the long winter months that were to come.

Photo: Associated Press



WHAT MANY HUNDREDS OF MEN OF THE MERCHANT SERVICE HAVE ENDURED

The ruthless Nazi war against merchant shipping of all nations, whether neutral or belligerent, called out the finest characteristics of the seaman. To the end of August, 1940, about 1,502,000 tons gross of British liners and cargo vessels was sunk, a large portion of it torpedoed without warning. An amount not far short of this total of neutral and Allied shipping was lost in similar fashion. The fate of the men so savagely attacked is typified in this photograph of a boatload of British merchant sailors who, adrift for ten days with a few biscuits and a beaker of water, are at last sighted and rescued by a British warship.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"



MOTOR BOAT RAMS A WARSHIP

In August, 1940, a motor torpedo-boat on night patrol mistook a larger German craft for an E-boat, rammed it and then fought with machine-guns and hand-grenades. Apart from stove-in bows, the gallant little vessel suffered slight damage and no casualties. Here her captain and first officer inspect the damaged bows.

Photo, Planet News

clear: air reconnaissance over the French, Belgian and Dutch coasts had revealed heavy troop concentrations around favourable embarkation points; reports from secret sources told of intensive training being carried out in invasion tactics; and barges and ships suitable for transporting troops and tanks were being collected in the "invasion ports." Already the enemy had begun his air attacks on aerodromes, an indispensable preliminary to the military assault in force.

To meet this threat the British Army, so miraculously extricated from the Dunkirk trap, had to be reorganized, re-armed and re-equipped. The coasts of Britain at vulnerable points had to be heavily fortified in depth. The civilian population had to be prepared to meet and endure prolonged air bombardment and the menace of sudden attack by air-borne parachute troops who might appear anywhere.

It was obvious in such circumstances that upon the Royal Navy must rest the major responsibility for breaking up any attempt at sea-borne invasion before it could reach the shores of Britain, and for cutting the enemy's supply lines if he succeeded in effecting a landing by air or sea. This responsibility necessitated a redistribution of British naval strength in home waters, and its concentration at points whence it could exercise unremitting vigilance over the enemy's movements at sea and from which it could readily sally forth to meet and break up any enemy attack from any of several possible directions.

The threat to the heart of the British Empire at that time and during the succeeding weeks of the summer of 1940 was possibly more dangerous than at any other time in the history of that Empire. These were almost unendurably anxious weeks for the leaders of Britain, and for the commanding officers and chiefs of staffs of the Navy, Army and Air Force. This history records elsewhere (see Chapters 114–115 and 119) how the Royal Air Force beat off and beat back the German attack from the air, and prevented the German invasion attempt from maturing during that autumn. Here we are concerned with the Royal Navy's part over that period.

Anxious Weeks for Navy Staff

As might be expected with a background of war strategy in general such as has been sketched above, it was for the Navy a period of unrelaxed watchfulness, of movements of squadrons and ships quietly to cover obvious danger points, of the unspectacular defensive rather than the dramatic offensive.

On August 14 the Admiralty announced the loss of the armed merchant cruiser "Transylvania" (16,923 tons), torpedoed by a U-boat while operating in the Atlantic; fortunately quick work by near-by ships and trawlers reduced the loss of life, and some 300 of her crew of 350 were saved. On the same day there was news of naval activities



UP GOES THE RED ENSIGN

So far from Mussolini being able to fulfil his boast that the Mediterranean was the Italian 'Mare Nostrum,' the British Navy carried out wide sweeps in August and September, 1940. In addition to actions with naval units, other vessels were stopped. The 'Verbena' (above), a ship with a cargo worth £150,000, was captured on her way to Abyssinia. Under the Red Ensign she was put to better uses.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

far on the other side of Africa. British light forces took a hand in the defence of British Somaliland (then being successfully attacked by large Italian land forces from Abyssinia) by bombarding troop concentrations and mechanized transport near the coast, the targets being spotted for the ships by a Blenheim aircraft. This bombardment temporarily held up the Italian advance between Zeila and Barbera.

As if to emphasize the widespread character of the Royal Navy's activities, while these two actions were taking place in the South Atlantic and the Red Sea there was a spirited engagement between motor torpedo-boats and German E-boats and larger craft in home waters, in the course of which one of the British craft rammed a German ship.

One of our M.T.B. captains later described the action. He said:

"Our patrol had just ended when I saw flares and discovered I was close to a German craft. It looked like an E-boat, so I decided to ram her, but as I got within a hundred yards I could see she was much larger. I put my helm hard over, but it was too late. My bows were stove in, and fragments of wood from the other ship were embedded in the hull."

During the action one of the British craft passed between two enemy vessels and engaged them with machine-gun fire and hand-grenades at almost point-blank range. All the British boats returned safely to port without suffering any casualties, though on their return journey they were attacked by a Dornier aircraft, which they beat off with machine-gun fire, damaging the 'plane.

On August 28 the Admiralty had to announce the loss by mine of H.M.S. "Hostile" (Lieut.-Comdr. A. F. Burnell-Nugent, D.S.C., R.N.), which had taken part in both the first and second battles of Narvik. And on September 5 it was learnt that two other destroyers had been lost and one damaged, either by torpedoes or mines. Those sunk were "Ivanhoe" (Commander P. H. Hadow, R.N.) and "Esk" (Lieut.-Comdr. R. H. Crouch, R.N.). H.M.S. "Express" (Captain J. G. Bickford, D.S.C., R.N.) was damaged, but managed to reach port safely. "Ivanhoe" was one of the destroyers which aided H.M.S. "Cossack" in the rescue of the British seamen held captive aboard the German prison ship "Altmark" in Joessing Fjord.

These losses were evidence of the difficult and dangerous work of the Navy in these gruelling weeks. But during the first week in September, in another region, the Navy was able to take the offensive. On Sept. 5 it was announced that during the preceding six days British fleets had carried out extensive sweeps throughout both the western and the eastern basins of the Mediterranean, without sighting any Italian ships. Under cover of these sweeps considerable reinforcements for British forces in the Middle East were landed safely.

The comb-out began on August 31, in the eastern Mediterranean, when an enemy aircraft attempting to shadow our forces was shot down by fighters of the Fleet Air Arm. On that day,



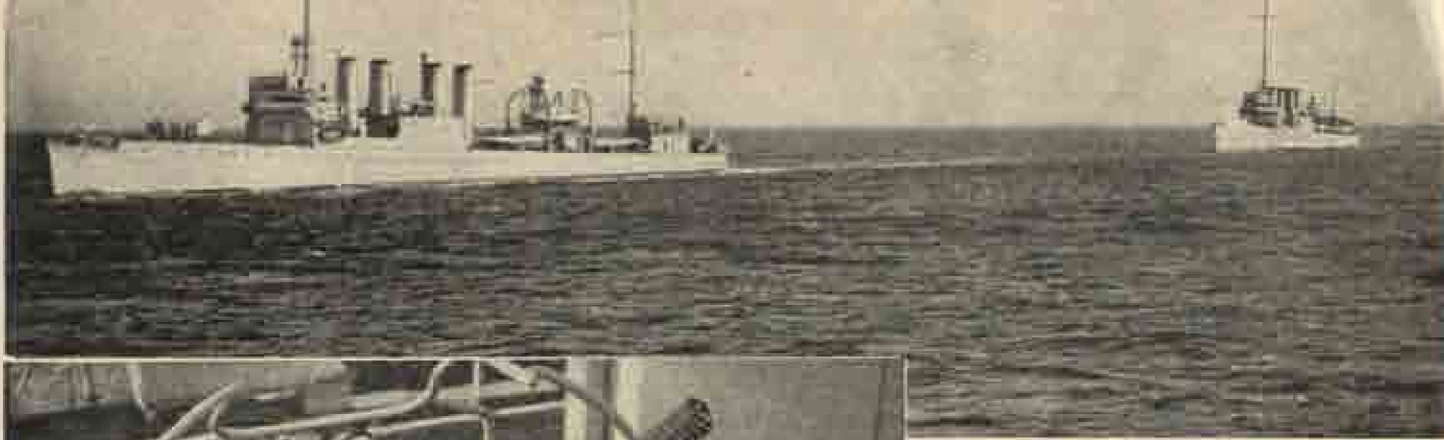


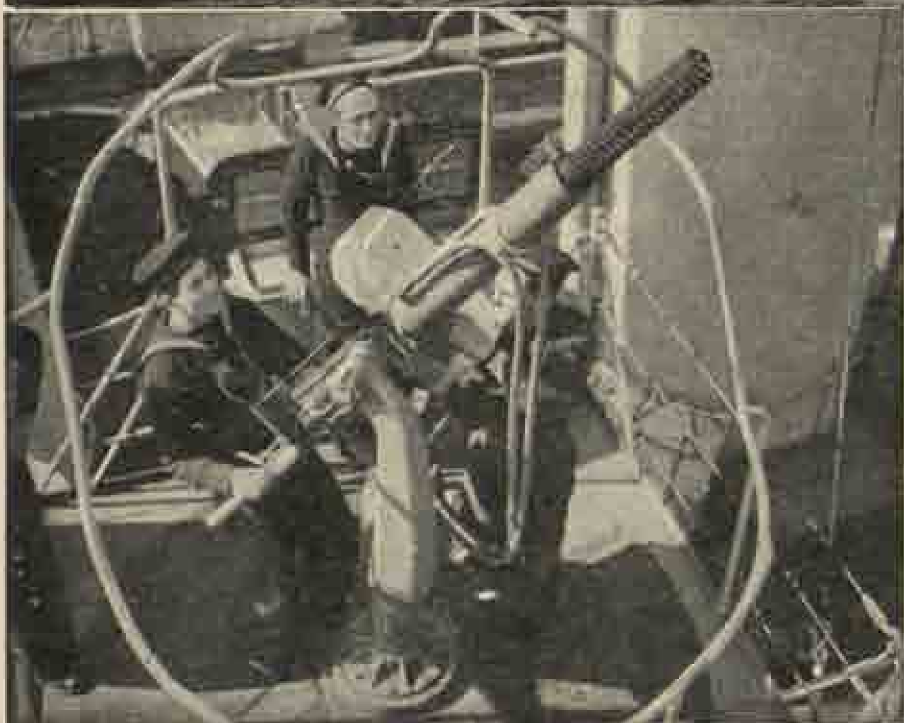
COMMAND OF HOME FLEET

On December 16, 1940, the command of the Home Fleet changed hands. Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles Forbes, G.C.B., D.S.O., is seen above leaving the flagship H.M.S. 'Nelson' on that day. On the left the new Commander-in-Chief, appointed October 17, Admiral Sir J. C. Tovey, K.C.B., D.S.O., greets his officers. He was previously Rear-Admiral commanding the destroyer flotillas of the Mediterranean Fleet and commanded H.M.S. 'Rodney,' 1932-34.

Photos, Central Press; British Official: Crown Copyright

too, it was learned from reports by our submarines that some enemy units were at sea in the central Mediterranean. H.M. submarine "Parthian" (Lieut.-Comdr. M. G. Rimmington, R.N.) attacked an enemy force of cruisers and destroyers and obtained two hits with torpedoes. Meanwhile, air reconnaissance reported that the enemy main





FIRST AMERICAN DESTROYERS ARRIVE

Late in September the first of the 50 U.S. destroyers transferred in exchange for eight naval bases crossed the Atlantic. Above, the first flotilla ('Churchill' leading) arriving at a British port. Laid up after 1918 and of about 1,100 tons, these were very valuable. Below, British sailors at an A.A. gun.
Photos, Keystone; Planet News

fleet, consisting of battleships, cruisers and destroyers, was observed by aircraft about 150 miles from our forces. Efforts were made to make contact, but it was found that the enemy had turned back immediately on learning that British forces were in the vicinity, and was heading at high speed for its base at Taranto.

At the same time another British naval force was operating in the Western Mediterranean, to the westward of Sicily and Sardinia. On the morning of September 1 Swordfish aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm from this force attacked the aerodrome at Elma, in Sardinia. Later an Italian communiqué admitted that considerable damage had been done. While returning from this attack one of our aircraft spotted an Italian submarine on the surface and, having no bombs left, flew low and machine-gunned the submarine's conning tower as it crash-dived below the surface.

On September 2 the force from the Eastern Mediterranean was attacked by enemy dive-bombers south-west of Malta. No harm was done to any of the British ships, nor were there any casualties, but Fulmar and Gladiator fighters accounted for five of the attackers, which turned out to be German dive-bombers of the Ju 87 type, manned by Italian crews. This was the first recorded instance of the appearance of German aircraft in the Mediterranean area, though later they were to arrive in much greater force, and with German pilots and crews.

On September 4 Fleet Air Arm 'planes attacked enemy aerodromes at Maritza and Calato, scoring direct hits and causing much damage. Following these attacks on Rhodes, our naval forces, among which were the Australian cruiser "Sydney" and the British cruiser "Orion," bombarded military objectives in the Italian Dodecanese Islands. While our warships were shelling the harbour of Pegadia, in the island of Scarpanto, five enemy motor torpedo-boats came out to attack, but were intercepted by H.M.S. "Ilex," which sank two and damaged a third. These two sweeps in the Mediterranean were the prelude to more directly offensive operations of the same nature later in the year, and the success of this particular venture was an augury of more sensational successes to come.

During all this time British submarines in the Mediterranean were patrolling its length and breadth, carrying out their twin duties of scouting for enemy naval forces and intercepting enemy supply ships bound for Libya. Successes in the latter field were reported by the Admiralty on September 10, when it was announced that H.M. submarines "Osiris" and "Rorqual" had between them sunk three Italian supply ships.

Submarines in home waters were making kills, too. On September 19 the news reached London that the "Sturgeon" had sunk a 10,000-ton German transport off Denmark early in the month. Reports from Stockholm suggested that there had been heavy loss of life among the German troops on board. And the next week, on September 26, it was announced that the submarines "H 49" and "Tuna" had successfully attacked enemy convoys.

Troop Convoys Destroyed

At the end of September there appeared in British waters the first of fifty over-age destroyers transferred to His Majesty's Government by the United States. British crews took over these vessels in North American ports. The ships proved a most valuable addition to the Royal Navy, and eased the position somewhat in the matter of escorts for convoys. Though classed as "over-age," and laid up after the war of 1914-18, they were of a type still extremely serviceable, with a displacement of about 1,100 tons. In place of the official numbers borne by the craft in the U.S. Navy they were given the names of towns and villages common to both Britain and the United States. The leader of the first flotilla to arrive was named "Churchill," and her sister ships were christened "Caldwell," "Cameron," "Castletown," "Chelsea,"

"Chesterfield," "Clare," and "Campbeltown."

Early in October the Admiralty broke its silence on the progress of our anti-submarine warfare, and issued a statement showing that in the previous few weeks seven U-boats and two Italian submarines had been sunk by our naval and air forces, and that others had been damaged. At the same time another communiqué revealed that H.M.S. "Osiris" had scored yet another success by torpedoing and sinking an Italian destroyer of the Curtatone class in the Adriatic on September 22.

Another extensive naval sweep was carried out in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean areas during the second week in October, this time with highly successful results. No contact was made with the enemy main forces, nor was there any indication that these forces ever put to sea; but in the course of the operations H.M.S. "Ajax" (Captain E. D. B. McCarthy, R.N.), famous for her part in the River Plate battle, made contact with three small Italian destroyers of the Airone class about 80 miles south-east of Sicily early in the morning of October 12. She immediately engaged them, and sank two of the Italian ships.

'Ajax' in Action Again

Shortly after this encounter "Ajax" sighted an enemy force composed of one heavy cruiser and four destroyers. She again engaged, and succeeded in crippling one of the enemy destroyers, but the remainder of the force escaped under cover of the darkness. Believing that "Ajax" was in touch with considerable enemy forces, H.M.S. "York" (Captain R. H. Portal, D.S.C., R.N.) came up in support, but no further contact was made with the Italians that night.

In the morning, however, the crippled Italian destroyer was located with the assistance of aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm. She had been taken in tow by another enemy destroyer, which, on the arrival of H.M.S. "Ajax," slipped the tow and made off towards Sicily at high speed under cover of a smoke screen. It was then ascertained that the damaged destroyer was the 1,620-ton "Artigliere," a warship of the latest class.

H.M.S. "York" now joined "Ajax," and the Italian crew were given half an hour to abandon ship, after which the "Artigliere" was sunk by gun-fire. "York" dropped rafts to supplement the boats and rafts for the survivors, and a wireless message was broadcast on the commercial wave-length of Italian stations, giving the position. As the Admiralty communiqué describing the action stated:

"This was done in spite of the fact that such a signal compromised the position of the British forces. Also the weather was fine and Sicily at no great distance. Experience at the sinking of the Italian cruiser 'Bartolomeo Colleoni' on July 19, when our rescuing destroyers were bombed by Italian aircraft, made it impossible for our ships to take any further measures for the safety of the survivors of the Italian destroyer."

During these spirited and successful actions there were only a few casualties; a little damage was done to H.M.S. "Ajax," but that only superficial and above the water-line, in no way impairing her fighting efficiency.

On October 16 came evidence that it was not only the bombers of the R.A.F. that were battering the German invasion ports along the Channel coast.





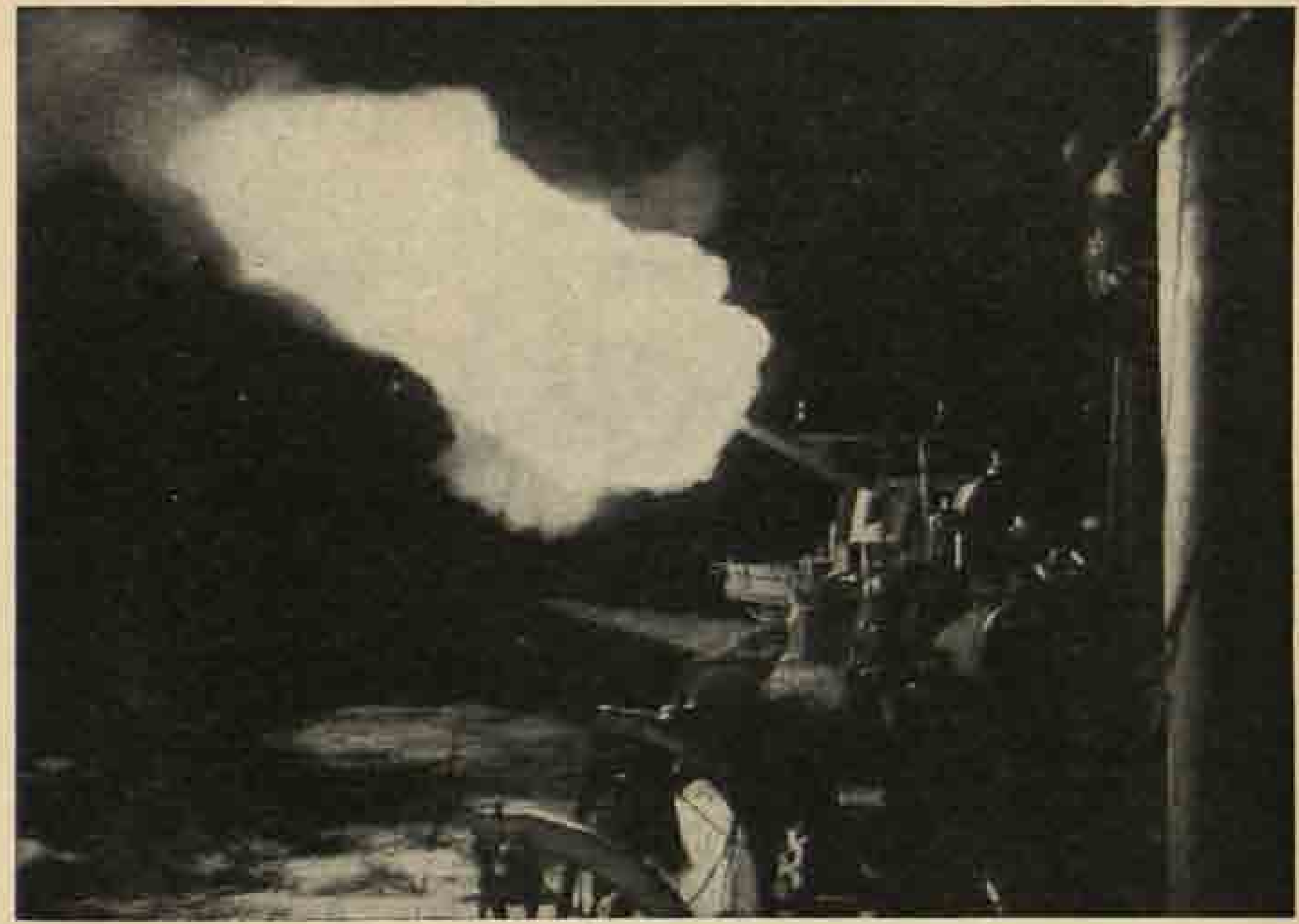
'ARTIGLIERE' WAS BLOWN OUT OF THE WATER

During an extensive naval sweep H.M.S. 'Ajax,' of River Plate fame, sank on October 12 two small Italian destroyers. Later in the day she crippled the 'Artigliere,' a modern 1,620-ton destroyer. The next morning 'York' came up and sank the Italian. Above, the crew abandoning ship; rafts were dropped for them. Right, the 'Artigliere's' magazine has gone up.

Photos, 'Daily Telegraph'; 'Daily Mirror'

An Admiralty statement that day told of a naval bombardment of Dunkirk, in which, as the communiqué put it tersely, "fires were seen to have been caused, and it is considered that much damage resulted." At the same time it was announced that a German convoy of three supply ships, with their two escort vessels, had been destroyed, and that another German vessel of about 7,000 tons had been attacked and hit with three torpedoes. On October 17 there was a brush between British light forces and a force of German destroyers off Brest. One of our cruisers was able to open fire at extreme range, but the visibility was bad and the light failing, and the enemy force escaped into Brest at high speed.

During the night of October 20-21 a British convoy in the Red Sea was attacked by two Italian destroyers, which fired torpedoes at the escorting



THE NAVY STRIKES AT AN INVASION PORT

The threat of invasion from French ports was dealt with by the Navy as well as by the R.A.F. One of the several bombardments was that of Cherbourg on the night of October 10-11. Here, taken by the light of her own gun flashes, is one of the ships in the act of bombarding the port where a shipping concentration had been detected.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

vessels and shelled the convoy. Our escorting vessels immediately opened fire on the enemy and gave chase. Contact was temporarily lost, but H.M.S. "Kimberley" regained touch at daylight and engaged one enemy destroyer, identified as the "Francesco Nullo." After an action lasting forty minutes the Italian ship ran ashore and was blown up by a torpedo fired from the "Kimberley." During the action "Kimberley" came under fire from a shore battery of three guns and received one hit. Splinters damaged a steam pipe and reduced her speed, but she silenced two out of the three guns.

Two further successes by British submarines and the loss by mine of the destroyer "Venetia" (Lieut.-Comdr. D. L. C. Craig, R.N.) were the last news of naval activity in October, given in an Admiralty statement issued on October 25. A German torpedo-boat was destroyed off the French coast by H.M. submarine "Swordfish," and an Italian supply ship of 6,000 tons was sunk in the Mediterranean by our submarine "Regent."

As will be seen from the foregoing record the period under review was not one of spectacular offensive operations and decisive victories at sea, and in the nature of things it could not be. It was a period of reorganization and redistribution of naval strength, of alert watchfulness, and of unremitting application to routine duties. How unremitting may be gauged from the melancholy toll of small craft lost—the trawlers and minesweepers and patrol vessels whose daily work of sweeping clear the channels and keeping watch and ward upon the shores of Britain received the dignity of a mention in Admiralty communiqués only when one of their number was lost.

Their names are a roll of patient devotion to unrewarding duty. Of them Kipling or Alfred Noyes might have made a resounding poem. Marsona, Drummer, Tamarisk, and Pyrope; Royalo, Resparko, Penzance, Dundee; Loch Inver, Sea King, Kingston Sapphire; Saucy, Sappho, Comet, and Recoil; Summer Rose, Warwick Deeping, Listrac, and Resolvo; Girl Mary, Dundalk, Velia, and Lord Stamp—sloops, yachts, trawlers, minesweepers, auxiliaries—small craft, but with great hearts.

An important naval appointment was made known on October 17: Rear-Admiral Sir J. C. Tovey, commanding Destroyer Flotillas, Mediterranean, succeeded Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles Forbes as Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet and was given the acting rank of Admiral. Admiral Tovey had been associated with the destroyer branch for most of his forty years in the Navy, and had commanded H.M.S. "Onslow" at the Battle of Jutland. From 1932 to 1934 he was in command of "Rodney." Promoted to Flag rank in 1935 and made Commodore of the R.N. barracks, Chatham, he was transferred to the Mediterranean in April, 1938. On October 17, also, came the news that Rear-Admiral Sir Henry Harwood, K.C.B., victor of the River Plate, had been appointed a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty and an Assistant Chief of Naval Staff.

Chapter 117

MERCHANT SHIPPING, AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1940: FIRST YEAR OF HOSTILITIES

A Year of War Reviewed—Progress of the Anti-Submarine Campaign—Germany Proclaims a 'Blockade'—Battle of Britain Begins—Channel Convoys Bombed and Shelled—Navicert System Extended—Shipowners and the Government—'City of Benares' Sunk—Loss of the 'Mahomed Ali El-Kebir'—Raiders in the Indian Ocean—Capture of the 'Weser'

While on land and in the air the first year of the war had been characterized by sporadic activity, at sea it was continuous from the sinking of the passenger liner "Athenia" on September 3, 1939. The aim of the Germans was to blockade the British Isles by a "sink at sight" policy conducted with all the ruthlessness of the war of 1914–1918, and it was hoped to equal, in the first year, the record of sinkings achieved in the spring of 1917, improving on that record in later months.

Thus, when war was declared, submarines and supply ships had already been posted at strategic points on the important trade routes. Great hopes were placed on the devastating effects of a new weapon—the magnetic mine, broadcast along the approaches and the entrance to estuaries and harbours. At the worst period of 1917 the sinkings of British ships were at the rate of 4,880,000 tons gross per annum. Towards the end of the first year of the Second Great War the Germans claimed that they had sunk 5,078,038 tons gross up to August 4. The actual sinkings up to the end of that month were 427 British ships of 1,669,677 tons gross, the total of British, Allied and neutral being under 3,000,000 tons. That was, of course, a high figure, but it was about half what the Germans had planned.

More important than the actual losses during the first year of the war was the fact that at the end of this period the British mercantile marine was stronger in tonnage than when war was declared—quite apart from the increase in Allied shipping brought about by the Nazi conquests in Europe. As is shown in Chapter 102 (pages 1055–68), the British war losses, together with losses from marine hazards, were made good by new shipbuilding, captures from the enemies, acquisition of ships belonging to enemy occupied countries, and purchases from neutrals, mainly from America. Besides this, the tonnage of our Allies amounted to over 6,000,000 tons gross. The loss of France as an ally is excluded from this consideration because that country was not self-supporting in merchant tonnage and so contributed nothing to the British shipping pool. Apart from a comparatively small amount of Dutch shipping required by the Dutch East Indies, all the tonnage of the Allies was available to Britain, though some was, however, left to trade outside the war zones.

First Year's Shipping Losses

Against this favourable balance of nearly 7,000,000 tons gross must be placed the tonnage immobilized while undergoing repairs, a varying but considerable figure. Nevertheless, the end of the first year of war found the Allies in a position of great strength in ship tonnage. In terms of importing capacity, however (as explained in Chapter 102), there was little, if any, gain, owing to the cutting off of the near Continental and Scandinavian sources of supply and to the virtual closing of the Mediterranean route for commercial shipping. In other words, the average round voyage of a ship was much longer than before, and each ship, on the average, was thus bringing in fewer cargoes.



DESTROYED TWO HEINKELS

On August 2, 1940 the S.S. 'Highlander,' a small passenger ship, was attacked by three Heinkels. The crew shot down two with their Lewis gun and the ship steamed into port next day with the wreckage of one draped over her stern. Captain William Gifford (above) and the gunner, George Anderson, were awarded the O.B.E.

Photo, Planet News

Disturbing Prospects

Looking back over the first year there was no cause for alarm, but in Aug. and Sept., 1940, the prospects were more disturbing. Shipping strength had been maintained only with the help of gains that were mainly non-recurring—captures and the merchant fleets of new allies—while losses had reached, and were kept, at a new high level. The Germans were making full use of their new bases for submarines and long-range bombers along the French coast, and protective naval escorts were seriously depleted by the collapse of our former ally. At the same time, Germany began the air offensive—first directed against merchant shipping convoys—that was intended as a prelude to swift victory.

The average weekly sinkings of British ships, which had trebled since the collapse of France, were at the same level in August, and in September over 300,000 tons gross of British shipping were sunk, the highest figure of any month since the beginning of the war. On two occasions in these months the weekly totals of British losses exceeded for the first time the 100,000 mark, and in the week ended September 22 they amounted to no less than 143,704 tons gross. It was following the publication of the figures for this week that the Admiralty broke its usual silence on the progress of the anti-submarine measures to reassure the British public that there were two sides to the picture. It was revealed that "in the last few weeks" nine U-boats (seven German and two Italian) had been destroyed. By the end of September more than 20 Italian submarines had been accounted for, though Italy's submarines and motor torpedo-boats had been of but meagre assistance to the Germans.

Apart from the peak period of losses in September, the rate of sinkings for

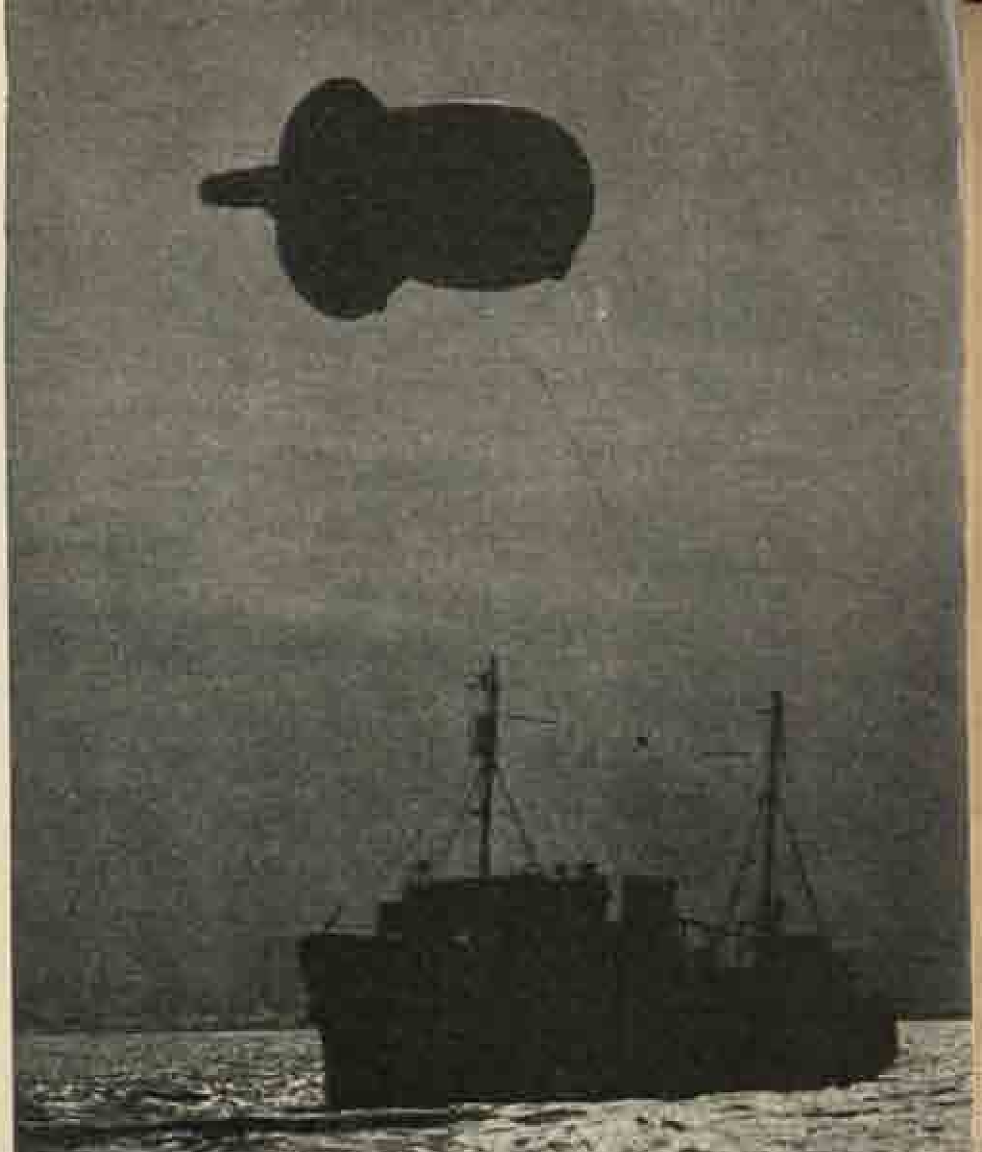
many months after June, 1940, was comparatively steady. This was, perhaps, the most disturbing feature of the shipping situation. It proved that Germany, for all her threats of worse to come, was putting every effort into the attempted blockade of Britain. In spite of this, early in August Germany loudly and solemnly proclaimed "a complete blockade of the British Isles." From then on, it was declared, ships trading with Britain would be sunk without regard to their nationality, as if this were a new policy. The sinking already of 740,000 tons gross of neutral shipping—including Italian, Japanese and Spanish vessels—was proof enough that from the first the German campaign had been conducted without regard to international law or the neutrality of nations.

But the new declaration was made with the intention of frightening ship-owners of the few remaining neutral maritime countries in Europe who continued to employ their ships in the lucrative trade with Britain. In particular the threat was aimed at the tramp shipping of Greece, and pressure was brought to bear in that country to persuade the shipping companies to break the chartering contracts they had made with the British Ministry of Shipping; as a bribe, alternative employment was offered in "the import trade of Germany and Italy," which, in fact, was non-existent so far as overseas supplies were concerned.

The declaration of an intensified campaign at sea followed closely on the opening of the mass daylight air raids of "The Battle of Britain." The first of these raids was made on August 8 (see Chapter 110). In the morning a formation of sixty aircraft, bombers and fighters, attacked a convoy off the Isle of Wight. A few hours later a hundred 'planes were launched against the same convoy, and in the afternoon another convoy was raided by 130 aircraft. Only two small ships, 2,540 tons together, were sunk; seven more—all coastal vessels—were damaged. But the Germans lost sixty 'planes. By contrast, on the same day, two German motor torpedo-boats, from near-by Channel ports, succeeded in sinking three merchant ships. Other mass raids on shipping were made during this period of the air war, but with much the same result, and not long after these tactics were abandoned. In the meantime barrage balloons were added to the defensive protection of coastal convoys.

Battle of Britain Begins

August saw another new development in the war on British shipping. On the



BALLOONS AT SEA

In August, 1940, barrage balloons were added to the protective devices of coastal convoys against Nazi dive-bombers. Although they slowed down the ships somewhat they proved effective. This evening photograph shows the type of merchant vessel protected with low-flown balloons.

Photo, Central Press

British, Allied and Neutral Merchant Shipping Losses	Sept. 3, 1939—July 31, 1940	Aug. 1940	12 months to Aug. 31, 1940	Sept. 1940
	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross
BRITISH				
Mercantile voyages	1,219,920	282,432	1,502,352	307,427
Naval operations	107,323	—	107,323	—
Naval auxiliaries	111,812	39,289	151,039	—
Naval trawlers	15,232	1,870	17,103	604
Total British	1,514,292	323,322	1,837,815	308,031
ALLIED ..	459,406	50,759	510,165	81,880
Total	1,973,698	374,240	2,347,978	389,420
NEUTRAL ..	732,121	54,281	789,402	46,737
Grand Total	2,705,819	428,521	3,137,380	436,157

22nd of that month batteries of heavy guns at Cap Gris Nez fired on a large convoy in the Straits of Dover, about midway between the two coasts. Escorting warships quickly laid a smoke screen. About 100 shells were fired, but none of the ships, on this occasion, was sunk or seriously damaged. But one more hazard had been added to the essential duties of the British merchant seaman.

Early in August the methods of conducting the blockade of Germany and Italy were revised by an extension of the navicert system and the introduction of "ship's warrants." The blockade machinery was extended to France and her North African colonies, and navicerts, formerly intended mainly to assist bona fide neutral trading, were made compulsory in the case of all goods consigned to European ports and also to certain neutral ports in North Africa. When navicerts had been obtained for all items of cargo, a ship's navicert was granted at the last port of loading. All cargoes consigned to or shipped from European ports, not wholly covered by navicerts or "certificates of origin" issued by British consuls, were regarded as suspected contraband liable to be seized as prize. Similarly, ships sailing without navicerts were presumed to be doing so only because they were unable to obtain navicerts for the whole of their cargo and were therefore deliberately carrying contraband. These ships were treated accordingly.

This represented an extension of the former blockade measures, but directed to the source of origin of the trade instead of to the cargoes and ships at sea. The new measures which were adopted at the same time were more comprehensive. They were designed to ensure that neutral shipping not directly controlled by the Allies would not be employed in trade in any way benefiting the enemy. Hitherto important shipping facilities under British control all over the world had been available to all vessels, such as provision of bunkers, dry-docking, repairing, insurance, stores and many minor services.



SEVENTY-ONE DAYS IN AN OPEN BOAT

When the S.S. 'Anglo-Saxon' was sunk by a raider off the Azores on August 21, two young seamen, Roy Widdicombe, aged 24 (left in the photograph), and Robert Tapscott, aged 19, sailed this boat 3,000 miles in 71 days and reached the Bahamas.

Photo, Wide World

With the introduction of the new control measures referred to above, these facilities were no longer available to shipowners who did not render commensurate service in return, or to those who failed to satisfy the British Government that they would refrain from carrying on trade which was injurious to the Allied war effort.

Neutral shipowners who gave acceptable undertakings as to the character of the trade on which their ships were engaged and who employed the navicert system for their ships, received for each vessel a "ship's warrant." This assured them of continued access to commercial shipping facilities under British control. In the event of one ship in a company's fleet attempting to run the blockade, the warrants for the whole fleet were cancelled.

Shipping Rates Fixed

After months of negotiations between the Ministry of Shipping and British shipowners, the rates of hire for requisitioned British ships were announced at the beginning of August. The rates for all the different types of ships were designed to cover the running costs of the vessels and, over and above, to provide 5 per cent. on the value of the ships for depreciation purposes and 5 per cent. for interest. Tramp rates were based on an assumed average value and varied on a scale according to the dead-weight tonnage of the vessels. Liners, on the other hand, were paid a fixed rate on the gross tonnage for running costs, the allowance for depreciation and interest being calculated on the actual value of each individual ship. The rates were retrospective to the time the ships came under requisition.

At the same time details were published of a war risk insurance scheme designed to make certain that ships lost during the war were eventually replaced. A proportion of the insurance money payable to shipowners for ships lost by war risks was thus retained by the Government in a pool, which could be drawn on only in order to finance replacements after the war.

The results of the German methods of sea warfare were brought home to the world by the sinking of the passenger

Enemy Losses in First Year of War	Sunk	Captured	Total
	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross
GERMAN ..	705,000	258,000	963,000
ITALIAN ..	123,000	150,000	273,000
Totals ..	828,000	408,000	1,236,000

In addition, about 33,000 tons of neutral shipping under enemy control had been sunk.

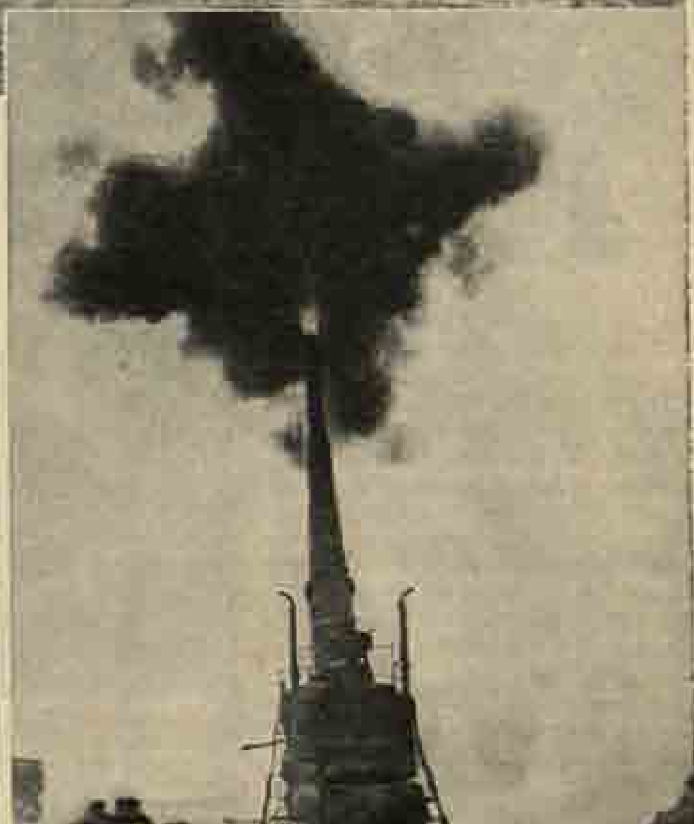


NEW DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHIPPING WAR

It was known that the Nazis were mounting heavy guns on the French coast, but it was not until August 22 that they fired from Cape Gris Nez on a shipping convoy in the Straits. Escorting warships laid a smoke screen and no serious damage was done. The range was about 20 miles. Above, near misses at the height of the attack. Below, right, a long range German gun, railway mounted, firing from the French coast. Below, left, the commander of an escorting warship on the look out.

Photos, Associated Press; Keystone; Wide World







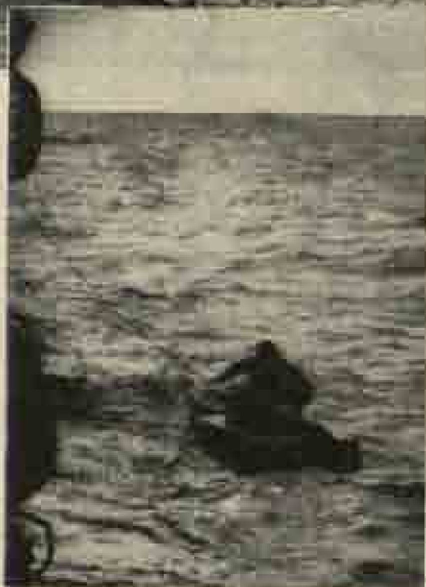
liner "City of Benares" on the night of September 17. On board were ninety children bound for Canada under the Government's evacuation scheme. The liner was torpedoed without warning about 600 miles out in the Atlantic. Tempestuous seas added to the difficulties of the darkness, and the death-roll was tragically high. Of the children, only thirteen, together with six more travelling privately, were rescued, and 248 out of a total ship's company of 406 were drowned. Forty-six of the survivors, including six children, were eight days in an open boat before a Sunderland flying-boat guided a warship to the rescue. The boat, under the skilful charge of the fourth officer, Mr. R. M. Cooper, was sailed or rowed; sometimes it was hove to with the sea anchor out owing to the stormy weather. The fourth officer later received recognition for his seamanship and courage.

The Germans attempted to excuse their action—first claiming that the liner had struck a mine, and later that she was an armed merchant cruiser and therefore a legitimate target for a surprise attack. Shortly after the disaster it was announced that no more children would be sent abroad under the Government's scheme during the winter. It was revealed at the time that a liner (the S.S. "Volendam") with 320 evacuees on board had been torpedoed in August in the Atlantic. The ship stayed afloat and was towed into port, and all the children were taken off by a warship and other vessels.

The "City of Benares" was a vessel of 11,081 tons gross, built on the Clyde in 1936. She was the flagship of the Ellerman Line. Another modern British passenger liner was sunk in August. She was the "Dunvegan Castle," of 15,007 tons, formerly engaged in the Union-Castle Line's intermediate service to South Africa, but converted for war service as an auxiliary cruiser. This loss, together with that of the 16,923-ton Anchor liner "Transylvania," brought the losses of armed merchant cruisers during the first year of the war to seven, totalling 113,141 tons gross.

Loss of a Transport

A rare occurrence was the loss, in August, of the transport "Mahomed Ali El-Kebir," a vessel of 7,290 tons gross, formerly owned by the Pharaonic Mail S.S. Company, of Alexandria. It was dusk when she was torpedoed and many of the men were turning in for the night. In a very few minutes all the troops were on the boat deck calmly awaiting orders to take to their boats, which were manned after the style of a peacetime drill. The naval ratings on board acted on their own initiative in handling the boats under difficult conditions. It was, indeed, only the outstanding bravery and discipline of the whole of the ship's company that averted serious loss of life. The last boat was not lowered but floated off the deck of the sinking ship, leaving about thirty officers and men on board. Among them was a naval petty officer who shouted as he dived into the sea, "Come on, mates. There'll always be an England—let's swim to it." They did not have to swim





WHEN 77 CHILDREN WERE DROWNED

One of the most hideous results of the German methods at sea was that following the torpedoing without warning of the 'City of Benares' on the night of September 17, 600 miles out in the Atlantic. She was bound for Canada under a Government evacuation scheme. Out of the 90 children on board only 19 were saved, six after spending eight days in a lifeboat. Of the ship's company, 248 out of 406 were also drowned. Above, survivors and a raft from the 'City of Benares.' Top left, children from the S.S. 'Volendam,' also torpedoed, but without loss, in August.

Photos, "Daily Mirror," Associated Press

far, as British warships came quickly to the rescue.

The "Mahomed Ali El-Kebir" was the third transport to be sunk during the first twelve months of war, apart from the ships lost in the improvised evacuation of the B.E.F. from France, when all sorts and sizes of ships never intended for transport duties were employed. This was a remarkable record in view of the hundreds of thousands of troops convoyed to the different theatres of war, including the Middle East.

That the smallest of British merchant ships could give more than a good account of themselves against attacks from the air was well illustrated by the feat of the coastal passenger steamer

Feat of the 'Highlander'

"Highlander," a vessel of 1,216 tons built in 1916. On the night of August 1 she was attacked off the East Coast by a German aircraft which, after dropping bombs from a low altitude without success, returned to rake the ship with machine-gun fire. The ship's gun sent the 'plane crashing into the sea in flames. Two minutes later the "Highlander" was attacked by another German aircraft. Again the bombs missed. As the 'plane circled to renew the attack it was hit, lost height and struck the ship's port lifeboat, swinging round and crashing on the "Highlander's" poop. The next morning the "Highlander" proudly steamed into harbour with the wreckage of the German 'plane on board.

Towards the end of August reports were received, within two or three days of each other, of German sea raiders in action in the Tasman Sea and the Indian Ocean. The loss of the "Turakina," a vessel of 9,691 tons owned by the New Zealand Shipping Company, was announced by Mr. P. Fraser, Premier of New Zealand, but the sinking of the tanker "British Commander," which was reported as being shelled in the Indian Ocean, was not confirmed. Early in September the British tanker "Cymbeline" was sunk by a raider after a brief exchange of shots about 600 miles from the Azores. Her master, with two of his officers, were fourteen days in an open boat before being picked up by another tanker.

Among other losses in September, two ships of the Donaldson Line were torpedoed in the Atlantic towards the end of the month. The whole of the crew of the "Corrientes," 6,863 tons, were picked up by a westbound freighter. The other liner was the "Sulairia," of 5,802 tons, and all but one of her crew were rescued by a British warship.





SURVIVORS OF THE ATLANTIC WAR

Top right, fifty seamen of the 'Corrientes,' a 6,800-ton ship of the Donaldson Line torpedoed in September, who, rescued by a Swedish freighter, reached American soil at Philadelphia with the skipper, Captain Thomas Stewart. Above, a lifeboat from the British merchant ship 'St. Agnes,' seen from the decks of the U.S. export liner 'Exochorda,' which rescued 64 men from the torpedoed vessel.

Photos, Keystone

The list of captured German ships was added to when the cargo liner "Weser" was intercepted by the Canadian auxiliary cruiser "Prince Robert," formerly a coastal passenger ship of the Canadian National Railways. The "Weser" had been lying at Manzanillo, in Mexico, since July. She sailed from that port on September 25 with a cargo of oil in barrels—reported to number 19,000—possibly intended for refuelling German warships. The ship and her cargo were captured intact the same evening. The "Weser" was of 9,179 tons gross and was owned by the Norddeutscher Lloyd. She was one of the fastest and best equipped ships of the cargo liner type in the German mercantile marine.

Merchant Shipping Losses and Gains for First Year of War

(Tons gross: The figures are approximate)

GAINS, British		
Captures		
German	258,000	
Italian	150,000	
Acquisitions		
French	400,000	
Danish	400,000	
		1,208,000
Purchase and building		950,000
Total		2,158,000
LOSSES, British:		
War	1,670,000	
Marine	200,000	
		1,870,000
NET GAINS, British		288,000
GAINS, Allied:		
Norwegian	3,750,000	
Dutch	2,000,000	
Belgian and Polish	500,000	
Total	6,250,000	
Less Allied War Losses*	389,000	
NET GAINS, Allied		5,861,000
TOTAL GAINS, British and Allied		6,149,000
Neutral tonnage chartered ...		750,000
TOTAL FAVOURABLE BALANCE		6,899,000

* Excluding French

Main Events of the First Year of War: Sept. 1, 1939, to Aug. 31, 1940

1939, September

1. Germany invades Poland.
3. Britain and France declare war. Liner 'Athenia' sunk.
4. First R.A.F. raid on Germany (Kiel Canal).
6. First enemy raid over Britain. Cracow falls.
7. Westerplatte surrenders.
12. Announced that British troops are in France.
14. Gdynia captured.
16. Germans claim capture of Przemysl and Bialystok.
17. Russia invades Poland. A/C 'Courageous' sunk.
19. Russian troops occupy Vilna. Hitler enters Danzig.
21. Rumanian premier, Calinescu, assassinated by Iron Guard.
22. French reach outskirts of Zweibruecken.
27. Warsaw surrenders.
29. Partition of Poland by Molotov and Ribbentrop. Soviet-Estonia pact signed.
30. Free Polish Government constituted in Paris.

October

1. Hela Peninsula surrenders.
2. R.A.F. fly over Berlin.
5. Soviet-Latvia pact signed.
6. Hitler announces 'peace' plan to Reichstag.
11. Soviet-Lithuania pact signed.
14. 'Royal Oak' sunk in Scapa Flow by U-boat.
16. Air raids over Firth of Forth.
17. Four raiders reach Scapa Flow; 'Iron Duke' damaged.
23. U.S. steamer 'City of Flint' brought by 'Deutschland' prize crew into Murmansk.
27. U.S. Senate repeals arms embargo.

November

4. Roosevelt's Neutrality Bill passed.
7. King Leopold and Queen Wilhelmina appeal for peace.
18. Dutch liner 'Simon Bolivar' sunk by mine.
23. H.M.S. 'Rawalpindi' sunk off Iceland by 'Deutschland.'
26. Soviet alleges frontier 'incident' in Karelian Isthmus.
30. Russia attacks Finland by sea, air, and land.

December

1. Soviet sets up puppet 'Finnish People's Government' at Terijoki.
6. Finns retreat to main defence line, Karelian Isthmus.
7. Polish submarines 'Wilk' and 'Orzel' join Navy.
13. Battle of the Plate between 'Graf Spee' and cruisers 'Achilles,' 'Ajax' and 'Exeter.'
16. Successful Finnish counter-drive in Suomussalmi district.
17. 'Graf Spee' scuttled.
19. First bombing of Helsinki. German liner 'Columbus' scuttled.
22. Great Finnish victory near Lake Tolva. Russians retreat in Karelian Isthmus, Petsamo and Salla region.
24. Finns cross Russian frontier near Lieksa.
30. Finnish northern armies destroy Russian division near Lake Kianta.

1940, January

5. Mr. Hore-Belisha, War Minister, resigns; Mr. Oliver Stanley succeeds him.
8. Russian 44th Division destroyed. Food rationing starts in Britain.
12. R.A.F. made greatest wartime survey flight over Austria, Bohemia, Eastern and N.W. Germany during night of 12-13.
19. Russians retreating on Salla front and N. of Lake Ladoga.
22. New Russian offensive round Lake Ladoga.
27. S. African House of Assembly rejects Hertzog's peace motion.
29. Widespread raids on British coasts from Shetlands to Kent.
30. Finns launch new offensive north of Kuhmo.

February

1. Russians launch violent attack at Summa.
5. Finns report big victory against Russian 18th Division, N.E. of Lake Ladoga.
12. First Anzacs arrive at Suez.
13. Russians capture advanced positions of Mannerheim Line.
16. British prisoners, numbering 299, taken from ships sunk by 'Graf Spee,' are rescued by 'Cossack' from 'Altmark' in Joessing Fjord.
19. Finns finally rout Russian 18th Division.
20. Russian 164th Division trapped at Kitela.
22. Fourteen Russian divisions massed for attack on Viipuri.
26. Finns evacuate fortress of Koivisto.

March

2. Russians reach Viipuri.
7. Battle for Viipuri continuing. Helsinki announces that peace negotiations are in progress.
8. R.A.F. over Posen, longest flight of war.
12. Soviet-Finnish Peace Treaty signed in Moscow.
18. Hitler and Mussolini meet at Brenner Pass.
20. Daladier resigns.
21. Reynaud becomes head of new Government.
26. Further sector of Allied front taken over by B.E.F.
28. Supreme War Council issue declaration of united action.

April

8. Norway protests against British mines in Norwegian territorial waters.
9. Germany invades Denmark and Norway. Oslo occupied. Off Narvik 'Renown' engages 'Scharnhorst' and cruiser of Hipper class. Destroyer 'Glowworm' sunk. 'Gurkha' sunk off Bergen. Cruiser 'Karlsruhe' sunk by submarine 'Truant.'
10. First Battle of Narvik. Massed air attack on Scapa Flow repulsed.
13. Second Battle of Narvik.
15. Announced that British forces had landed in Norway.
19. Landings in Norway continue.
23. Second War Budget. Income-tax 7s. 6d.

May

1. Allied forces S. of Trondheim evacuated from Aandalsnes.
2. Allied forces north of Trondheim evacuated from Namsos.
10. Germany invades Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg. Allied troops enter Belgium. Mr. Chamberlain resigns; succeeded by Mr. Churchill. British troops land in Iceland.
11. Germans cross Maas at Maastricht. Churchill forms War Cabinet.
13. Queen Wilhelmina goes to England.
14. Germans cross Moerdyk Bridge. Rotterdam bombed to ruins. Dutch High Command orders cease fire. Government moves to London.
15. Enemy cross Meuse near Sedan. War Office creates Local Defence Volunteers.
17. Germans enter Brussels.
19. Weygand succeeds Gamelin as C.-in-C.
21. Germans reach Amiens and Arras.
23. Abbeville in enemy hands. Germans cross Scheldt at Oudenarde.
24. Tournai and Ghent captured.
26. Boulogne occupied.
28. Belgian armies surrender by order of King Leopold. Narvik captured by Allied forces.
30. Evacuation from Dunkirk.

June

2. First enemy raid on Paris.
5. Germans launch new offensive along Somme and Aisne.
7. First V.C. of war awarded (Warburton-Lee).
9. Enemy reach Rouen.
10. Italy declares war on Allies. Withdrawal of Allied troops from North Norway. King Haakon and Govt. in London.
11. Germans cross Seine near Rouen. First R.A.F. raids on Libya and Italian E. Africa.
12. First bombing raid on Italy (Turin, Genoa, etc.).
14. Germans enter Paris.
15. Verdun captured.
16. Reynaud Cabinet resign. Marshal Pétain forms new Government. British Government offer Act of Union.
17. Pétain announces that he has sued for peace.
18. Hitler and Mussolini meet in Munich.
20. Germans occupy Lyons.
22. French sign armistice with Germany at Compiègne.
23. General de Gaulle forms French National Committee.
24. French sign armistice with Italy at Rome. Italians occupy Menton.
28. Rumania cedes Bessarabia and N. Bukovina to Russia. Channel Islands occupied by German troops.

July

1. Rumania renounces Anglo-French guarantee of her neutrality. Graziani appointed C.-in-C. in North Africa.
2. Liner 'Arandora Star,' carrying enemy internees to Canada sunk by U-boat.
3. Royal Navy seizes all French warships in British ports. Action against those at Oran and Mers-el-Kebir.
4. British withdraw garrisons at Kassala and Gallabat, Sudan.
5. Pétain Government severs diplomatic relations with Britain.
6. Fleet Air Arm attack battleship 'Dunkerque' grounded at Oran.
8. French battleship 'Richelieu' at Dakar put out of action.
9. Naval engagement east of Malta. Other naval forces sweep towards Central Mediterranean.
16. Garrison in British Moyale withdrawn.
19. Sir Alan Brooke becomes C.-in-C. Home Forces.
23. Third War Budget. Income-tax 8s. 6d.
25. French ship 'Meknès,' repatriating 1,300 French naval officers and men, sunk off Portland by enemy M.T.B.
30. Award of Army's first two V.C.s.
31. H.M.S. 'Alcantara' damages disguised German raider off Brazil.

August

2. Lord Beaverbrook joins War Cabinet.
3. Lithuania incorporated into Soviet Union.
4. Italians invade Brit. Somaliland.
5. Latvia incorporated into Soviet Union.
6. Estonia also incorporated.
8. Air attacks on Britain intensified. Two convoys off South Coast fiercely attacked; 61 raiders shot down.
11. Massed attacks on balloon barrage, Portland, Weymouth and East Coast shipping; 65 raiders destroyed.
12. Large-scale attacks on Dover, Portsmouth and Isle of Wight; 62 raiders destroyed.
13. Mass attack on Portsmouth and Southampton. Enemy lose 78 aircraft.
15. Enemy onslaught from Tyne to Plymouth. Fighter aerodromes heavily attacked. Germans lose 180 machines.
16. Intense air attack S.E. areas. Enemy lose 75 aircraft.
17. U.S.A. and Canada set up Joint Defence Board.
18. Mass raids on S.E. areas. Enemy lose 152 aircraft. First British raid on Addis Ababa.
19. Evacuation of Brit. Somaliland announced.
21. Rumania cedes Southern Dobruja to Bulgaria.
24. Mass attacks on Britain resumed. First bombs on Central London. Germans lose 52 aircraft.
25. Enemy lose 55 'planes over Britain. First R.A.F. bombing raid on Berlin.
26. 47 raiders shot down. Chad Territory joins Allies.
28. Enemy lose 25 aircraft over Britain.
29. French Congo and Cameroons join Allies.
30. Evacuee ship, taking 320 children to Canada, torpedoed in Atlantic. Mass raids on inland Fighter aerodromes. Great air battles over London. Enemy lose 62 aircraft. Rumania cedes Northern Transylvania to Hungary.
31. Germany loses 89 aircraft over Britain.

FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR IN RETROSPECT: TO AUGUST 31, 1940

Obliteration of Poland—Russian Invasion of Finland—Nazi Onslaught Against Norway and Denmark—Lightning Conquest of the Low Countries—Belgian Surrender—Forcing the Meuse, the Nazis Reach the Channel Ports—Withdrawal of the B.E.F.—Battle of France—Reynaud's Government Falls, and Pétain Sues for Peace—France Capitulates—Mussolini Enters the War—Britain Stands Alone But Indomitable

September 1939. September 1940. Only a year, but in that brief space what changes were wrought! Never, perhaps, in history, certainly never in modern history, has the map of Europe been so rudely treated. Not even Napoleon was able to effect so much change in so short a time. Hitler had advantages which Napoleon never enjoyed; with his tanks and dive-bombers he obliterated frontiers, took whole peoples into captivity, overran state after state, until the continent was crushed beneath, or, at least, threatened by, the wheels of the juggernaut he and his Nazis had created and perfected. When the first rays of the September sun gilded the plains of Poland the Nazis began to march; and long before the war's first year was ended they had overrun Poland, Norway and Denmark, Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg, and finally France.

The conquest of Poland required a campaign of less than a month: before September, 1939 was out the republic had been expunged from the map and its territory divided between the Nazi wolf and the Russian jackal. After that first essay in *blitzkrieg* there was an interval of six months. The spotlight of interest shifted to the north, where in October, following his seizure of half Poland and his virtual occupation of the three little Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Stalin stretched out his hands to Finland. Though outnumbered by twenty or thirty to one, though possessed of few 'planes and next to no mechanized equipment, the Finns maintained a resistance hardly equalled in heroism in the whole history of war. In "General Winter" they found a most puissant ally, and tens of thousands of Russians were wrapped by the snows in the sleep of death. Hundreds of 'planes were brought down by the Finnish marksmen; hundreds of tanks sank to disaster in the snowdrifts; villages with strange-sounding names — Suomussalmi, for instance, Kitela, Pitkaranta, Kuolajärvi, Salmijärvi, and Salla—sprang into fame as the battlefields where a few thousands of Finnish soldiers had defeated, nay crushed, the choicest regiments of the Red Army. On the Mannerheim Line in the Karelian Isthmus the Finns put up a superb stand, and when at last the position was outflanked rather than overrun, the military critics spoke somewhat pityingly of its planning and construction. The Maginot Line was so very much better. . . .



BRITAIN'S INDOMITABLE LEADER

The outstanding fact in the first completed year of Britain's war against Nazi Germany was the inspiring leadership of Winston Churchill, who took the helm after the collapse of the Chamberlain Government on May 10. In defeat and disaster as in triumph by air and sea, he typified in his person, his oratory and his deeds the determination of the nation and its Allies to endure and to do all until victory was attained. When this photograph was taken he was visiting the 'front line' at Dover and Ramsgate on August 29, 1940.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

But at last Russia's uncountable hosts crashed their way through to victory. Finland submitted to Stalin's will. But never will Finland's fight be forgotten. Finland's surrender was dated March 12, but still Scandinavia remained in the very forefront of the news. There was much diplomatic parleying between the Allies and Norway concerning the use of Norwegian territorial waters by ships conveying Swedish iron-ore from Norway's Atlantic port of Narvik to the German harbours. Once, on February 17, British warships invaded Norway's waters and intercepted the "Altmark," Germany's prison-ship of infamous repute, which was conveying a number of British merchant seamen as prisoners-of-war to Germany. Then on April 8 the Allies gave notice that they were mining the Norwegian channel through which the Nazi ore-ships passed.

Up to now the war in the west had been a strange war indeed. Along the French frontier the two great armies watched and waited, entrenched on the one hand in the Maginot Line and on the other in its Siegfried counterpart. For months hardly a shot was fired. The French were not anxious to force the issue, and Hitler seemed to be not yet fully prepared for a life and death struggle with France and Britain. He even launched a futile peace offensive in the hope that the Allies would accept the Polish conquest as a fait accompli.

At the turn of the year three alternatives were open. He could stand on the defensive, hoping with the help of the counter-blockade to wear down the Allies' determination; or he might attempt to crush the morale of the



GERMAN CRUISER SUNK BY ONE BRITISH BOMB

Hit by a submarine's torpedo in Norwegian waters, the light cruiser 'Konigsberg' put into Bergen harbour on April 10, 1940. There she was found by a Fleet Air Arm bomber which scored a hit directly amidships. In ten minutes the warship sank, blocking the entrance to a dock. This photo, one of a series taken from a house overlooking the harbour, shows the mortally wounded cruiser backing away from the pier.

Photo, Associated Press

British and French people by launching the Luftwaffe against them in an unrestricted air attack; or, counting on the inability of the Allies to attack, he could take time to expand his army and air force and make good the wastage of the Polish campaign, and then at the right moment use his forces in one tremendous attempt to secure decisive victory. It was this third course which he adopted.

On April 9, the day following the mining by the Allies of the Norwegian waters, the German onslaught on Scandinavia began.

Invasion of Denmark and Norway

Denmark was overrun with hardly a shot being fired in its defence; while in Norway a number of ships which had arrived some days before at the quaysides, and were waiting in readiness, disgorged their cargoes of armed men on to the quays of Narvik, Bergen, Trondheim and Stavanger. On the same day a few hundred German soldiers marched unopposed into Oslo, the capital, and occupied all the strategic points until they could be reinforced by troops landed from other ships or brought by 'plane. Too late the Osloans awoke to the fact that they had been bluffed into surrender; too late Norway as a whole realized her folly in not linking her fortunes with the Allies, relying instead on an out-of-date conception of neutrality. Off the coast of Norway Britain's fleet, supported by Norwegian guns, took heavy toll of Hitler's navy, but the evil had been done. Thousands of German soldiers had entered the country, thousands more arrived day by day; and when the Allied Expeditionary Force landed at Namsos and Aandalsnes, it was not only opposed by an enemy immensely superior in arms and numbers, but subjected to an aerial bombardment as demoralizing as it was devastating. Never was it able to establish air mastery. Landing in the middle of April, the British troops were withdrawn in the first two or three days of May; Narvik, which was not captured until May 28, was evacuated on June 10. It was an ill-conceived adventure. Not for the first time Germany's opponent had taken action too late.

In Britain the news of the evacuation of the British troops from Norway was received with anger: people had been buoyed up by hopes of victory based on extravagant reports received from neutral sources—reports which the British authorities, while not confirming, had done little to "debunk." When the truth was known the reaction was all the more violent. There were bitter speeches in the House of Commons, and Mr. Chamberlain's Government, already

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Mr. Churchill on The First Year

On August 20, 1940, Mr. Churchill reviewed the events of the first year of hostilities. After the collapse of France he said.

"The British nation and the British Empire, finding themselves alone, stood undismayed against disaster. No one flinched or wavered. . . . Our people are as united and resolved as they have never been before. Death and ruin have become small things compared with the shame of defeat or failure in duty. . . .

"Our Navy is far stronger than at the beginning of the war. The great flow of new construction set on foot at the outbreak is now beginning to come in. . . . The seas and oceans are open. The U-boats are contained, the magnetic mine is mastered. The merchant tonnage under the British flag, after a year of unlimited U-boat war, after eight months of intensive mining attack, is larger than when war began. We have in addition under our control four millions of shipping from the captive countries which has taken refuge here and in the harbours of the Empire. . . .

"The great air battle which has been in progress over this island for the last few weeks has recently attained a high intensity. It is too soon to attempt to assign limits either to its scale or its duration. . . .

"The gratitude of every home in our island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world, except in the abodes of the guilty, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied by their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of world war by their prowess and by their devotion. **Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.**"

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undermined by months of criticism because of its failure to grasp the realities of a great and grim situation, tottered to its fall. On May 10 it crashed, and other and greater things crashed with it, for on that day Hitler's armies invaded Holland and Belgium.

While on this side of the North Sea Britain girded up her loins under the inspiring leadership of Winston Churchill, who formed a ministry drawn from all the great parties in the House,

Hitler's war machine crashed its way through the Low Countries. Holland's resistance lasted a mere five days, but the Dutch did all that brave men could do. Only when the heart of Rotterdam had been converted into a shambles by squadrons of Hitler's bombers, only when the whole of the Netherlands had been converted into a battlefield in which the invaders were all too ably assisted by Fifth Columnists and parachute troops, only when a quarter of Holland's little army had fallen in battle—only then did Holland sue for peace. And even then her Queen and her Government managed to escape to London, where they continued to organize and direct the effort of the vast Netherlands Empire overseas.

In Belgium the struggle was more prolonged, for King Leopold appealed for help to Britain and France, who immediately denuded their fronts in France by rushing divisions to his aid. (Later it was realized that in so doing they had fallen headlong into Hitler's trap.) On the very first day of invasion the British Expeditionary Force crossed into Belgium, and a few days later was in action beyond Louvain. But in the French sector there were "incredible mistakes," as Reynaud styled them.

B.E.F. in Belgium

On May 15 the Germans forced the passage of the Meuse near Sedan, and their tanks forthwith smashed their way through the French defences. The Maginot Line, it was now revealed—that Line on which France had based all her hopes—did not extend beyond Montmédy save as a string of trenches and concrete gun-posts. The Germans saw no reason to attack it directly, but drove across the Meuse and spread out in all directions behind it. Demoralization spread far and wide behind the fighting front, if front there still were; desperate efforts were made to close the gap, but it remained open—nay, was widened. A great host of tanks and mobile infantry was rushed through into the plains of Northern France, and the communications of the British and French armies in Belgium were severed. Retreat became inevitable, and after some little delay it was ordered.

Back they marched from Louvain, fired by the hope—the desperate hope—of joining up with the main French armies now engaged in furious battle to the north-east of Paris. On May 17 the Germans entered Brussels, and a week later, with the occupation of Ghent and Tournai, practically all Belgium had been overrun. King Leopold and what was left of his armies were forced up against the coast near Ostend. On his right were Gort's divisions, linked with the French in Lille but with no hope of making juncture with Weygand's new line on the Somme. Even that line, indeed, was endangered, for on May 21 the Germans entered Amiens, and two days later Abbeville; on May 26 they occupied Boulogne, having already seized Calais, after overcoming the magnificent defence of the British rearguards. On that same day, May 26, Leopold, with his towns in flaming ruins, his armies defeated, gave the order for surrender. At the time his action was hotly denounced by his Allies, particularly the French, but history may well reverse or revise the bitter judgement of those desperate days.

But the Belgian collapse put Gort in a most dangerous position. His left flank was laid open; on his front and on the right he was heavily engaged with an immensely superior foe. The struggle was watched with the most painful interest from across the Channel, and in Germany they were already prophesying the imminent capture of the whole B.E.F. But fortunately this was not to be. From Dunkirk from May 30 to June 4 a motley armada snatched the khaki army from the very jaws of the German pincers. The B.E.F. lived to fight another day, but with the loss of all its equipment. It was, as Mr. Churchill said, both a miracle of deliverance and a colossal military disaster.

Meanwhile, the Battle of France was rushing to its disastrous close. On May 19 Gamelin had given place to Weygand,

UNITED STATES AND CANADA JOIN HANDS IN DEFENCE

After the triumph of the Battle of Britain the year's most satisfactory development was effective abandonment of mere neutrality by the U.S.A. The agreement for the joint defence of the North American Continent was reached at a conference on Aug. 18, 1940. The joint Defence Board thereafter set up held its first meeting in Ottawa later in the month. Among its members were (1) Dr. H. L. Keenleyside, Canadian Secretary; (2) Mr. H. D. Hickerson, U.S. Secretary; (3) Brigadier K. Stuart, D.S.O., M.C., Deputy Chief of the Canadian General Staff; (4) Captain L. W. Murray, R.C.N., Deputy Chief of the Canadian Naval Staff; (5) Commander F. P. Sherman, U.S. Navy; (6) Air Commodore A. A. L. Cuffe, Royal Canadian Air Force; (7) Lt.-Col. J. T. MacNarney, U.S. Army Air Corps; (8) Major J. S. Gullet, Air Attache, U.S.; (9) Lt.-General S. D. Embick, U.S. Army; (10) Mr. O. M. Biggar, K.C., Canada; (11) Hon. P. Moffatt, U.S. Minister to Canada; (12) Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister of Canada; (13) Hon. Fiorella H. La Guardia, Mayor of New York (U.S. Chairman); (14) Hon. J. L. Ralston, Canadian Minister of National Defence; (15) Captain H. W. Hill, U.S. Navy.

Photo, Sport & General



and with pathetic faith the French trusted him to work the miracle which alone could save their country in that desperate hour. But no miracle was forthcoming—no such miracle as saved France on the Marne in 1914. The Somme line, where the new generalissimo had planned to hold the enemy, was forced, and the French divisions reeled back to the Seine and the Aisne. They were given no respite. Day and night they were battered by the Nazi tanks and dive-bombers. On June 10 Rouen fell, and on June 14 the German hosts goose-stepped through the streets of Paris. The next day Verdun surrendered—that Verdun which the Germans in the last war sacrificed hundreds of thousands of lives to win, but never won. "They shall not pass!" vowed France in 1916, and was bled white in maintaining that heroic resolve. In 1940 they passed with ease, and pressed on to ravage France's heart.

The Reynaud cabinet fell on May 16, and at Bordeaux—now the seat of the government—there developed a battle for France's soul. The British urged their ally to continue the struggle from the French colonies; Mr. Churchill made the unprecedented gesture of proposing an Act of Union between the two countries. But the spirit of resistance was dying, almost dead. Marshal Pétain, who assumed the premiership, had come to the conclusion that all was lost save honour, and decided to sue for terms. So on June 21 France's plenipotentiaries sat in the railway coach at Compiègne where twenty-two years before Foch had dictated terms to a defeated Germany. Now it was France's turn to taste the bitterness of defeat, and Hitler saw to it that the cup of misery and humiliation was filled to overflowing. Just before the final capitulation of France as a military power Mussolini deemed the moment opportune for intervention, and in the streets of Mentone his troops won what he, at least, described as "a great and glorious victory." The armistice signed with Italy at Rome brought the main fighting in France to a close, but for some days yet isolated forts in the Maginot Line continued to thunder against the enemy.

France Capitulates

France's collapse left Britain standing alone, and Hitler may well have expected her to give up the unequal struggle. Perhaps it was for that reason that he did not order his forces to the immediate assault of the British fortress, before the men back from Dunkirk had been reorganized and re-equipped. More likely, however, the Fuehrer was obliged to wait until his own troops had recovered from the fury of the French campaign. For weeks yet they licked their wounds.

The respite was made good use of. Britain herself was put into a good state of defence, and every effort was made to speed up the production of the munitions of war. The Home Guard grew from strength to strength, and armies of young men received instruction from the veterans of Dunkirk. The Civil Defence services were brought to a high



THE WORST OF A BAD YEAR

A special edition of the 'Berliner-Lokal-Anzeiger' was issued for this announcement "from the Fuehrer's headquarters."

> PETAIN DECLARES
> FRANCE MUST LAY DOWN HER ARMS
> The Führer and the Duce Confer
>
> G.H.Q. June 17, 4.44 p.m.
>
> The Prime Minister of the newly formed French Government, Marshal Pétain, has declared, in a broadcast to the French people, that France must lay down her arms. He referred to the steps already taken by him to apprise the Reich's government of this decision and to the conditions under which the German Reich is prepared to meet the French wishes.
>
> The Führer will hold a conference with the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Italy, Benito Mussolini, at which the attitude to be adopted by both states will be considered.

state of efficiency, stimulated by the Nazi bombing raids which were now of ever more frequent occurrence. But abroad the situation was filled with menace. The defeatism of France had immensely increased Britain's danger, and it was desperation that dictated the attacks on the French warships at Oran and Dakar; if Hitler had managed to secure the French Navy, then Britain's dominions over the sea might have been more than threatened. Farther afield the policy was one of withdrawal, of waiting and preparing to fight the better another day. Garrisons at Kassala and Gallabat on the Sudan-Abyssinian frontier were withdrawn before Italian pressure; likewise at Moyale, facing Kenya. Then in August there was a brief campaign in Somaliland which resulted in the abandonment of the British colony to the enemy. Militarily, these withdrawals were of little consequence, but they could not but have a detrimental effect on our prestige.

On the continent of Europe Hitler now strutted as the greatest conqueror of all time. And not without reason, be it admitted, when we remember that in a brief twelvemonth Poland had been conquered, Norway overrun, Denmark seized, Holland subjugated, Belgium crushed, France flung on the altar of sacrifice. Only Britain now stood out against the triumphant Fuehrer. So, as the first year of war drew to its close, against Britain he discharged his fleets of bombers and fighters, while along the 2,000 miles of coast from the North Cape to the Pyrenees he plotted and prepared for that invasion which he confidently predicted would soon bring Britain to her knees. Alone she stood against a continent in arms; and yet not alone, for behind and beside her were grouped the mighty nations of the English-speaking world. Canada and Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, India and the scattered colonies and islands—all intensified their war effort.

Britain Stood Alone

The countries which had been overrun—they also contributed to the combined effort: Polish sailors sailed with our fleets, Polish and Czech airmen fought the foe in Britain's skies, the Dutch and Norwegian mercantile marines joined our own, and the vast tropical wealth of the Dutch and Belgian colonies was flung into the scale on our side. Then America had already left neutrality far behind and was realizing that Britain was fighting not only her own battle but America's too.

So at the end of the first year Britain was indomitable. There was never a false note in her trumpet-blast of defiance. "We stand on the road to victory," said Mr. Churchill in his magnificent oration in the House of Commons on August 20, and "we mean to reach our journey's end."

British Casualties in the First Year

	France	*Norway*
Troops sent (June, 1940) ...	437,000	25,000
Prisoners of War	40,000	950
Killed...	13,000	250
Returned (including wounded)	384,000	22,800

From figures given in the House of Commons by the Financial Secretary to the War Office, May 15, 1941.



WARSHIPS HAVE FIERCE ENEMIES ALOFT

Aircraft are over this British destroyer 'somewhere at sea' in the autumn of 1940, with the crew at 'action stations' at a quick-firing A.A. gun. The close attention paid to anti-aircraft protection of the modern warship is shown by the considerable A.A. armament that even destroyers carry. Apart from purely naval incidents, destroyers are continuously employed on arduous convoy work, protecting supply and other ships from enemies who strike suddenly from below and above the seas.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



CAPUZZO AND BARDIA BOMBARDED BEFORE GRAZIANI ADVANCED

The threat of an Italian invasion of Egypt was constantly in the minds of the naval authorities, and in one of the many sweeps of August and September, 1940, Fort Capuzzo and Bardia, later to become world-famous scenes of British land victories, were heavily bombarded. Above, H.M.S. 'Malaya,' a battleship of 31,100 tons (35,000 tons loaded), with another battleship and an attendant cruiser, steams to sea. Below, 15-in. battleship guns in action during the bombardment, which took place on August 17

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

